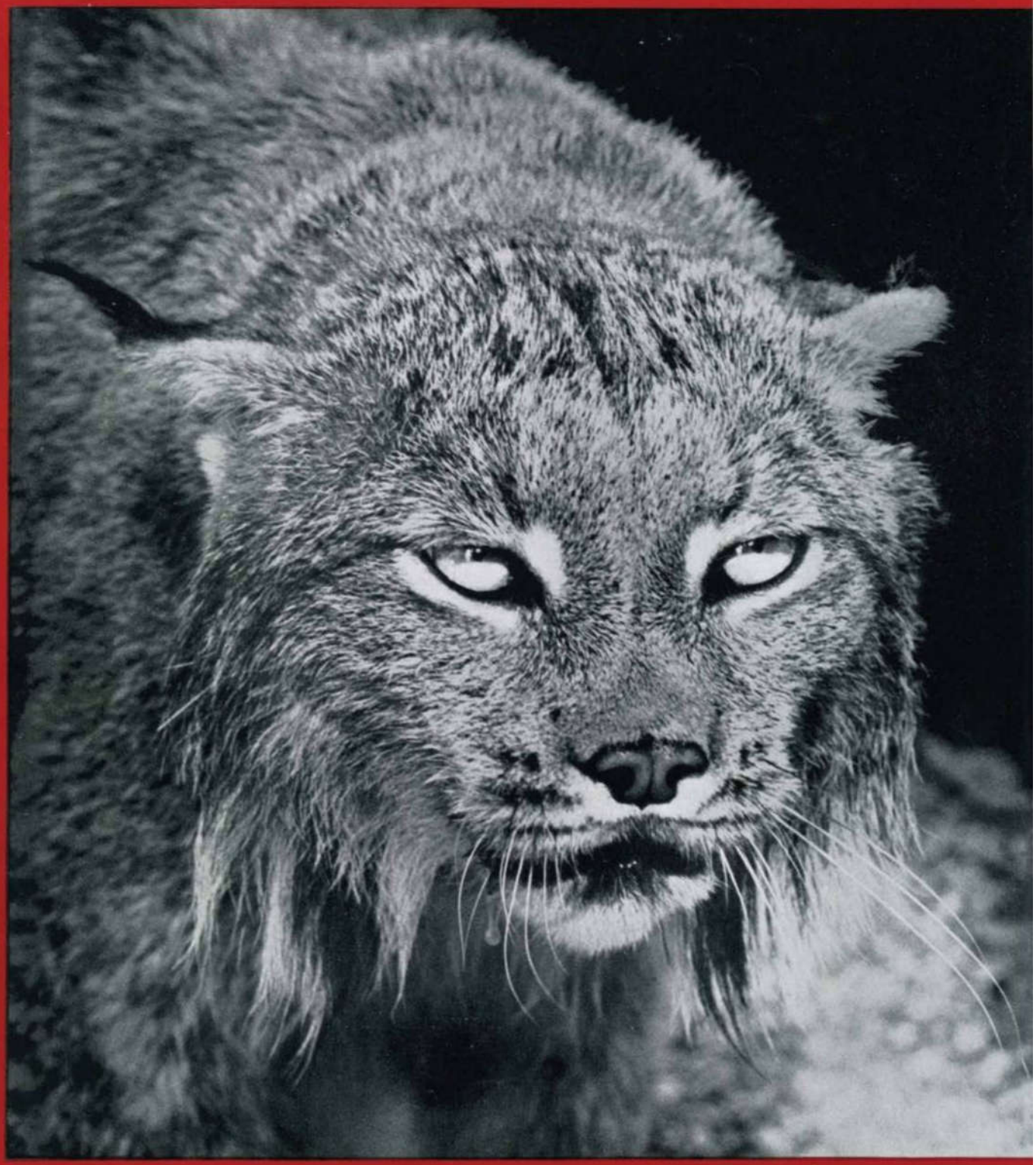
The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY Hudson's Bay Company. INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670 OUTFIT 277 MARCH 1947

For lasting charm and luxurious warmth . . .
throughout a lifetime of wear.

HUDSON'S BAY *Point* BLANKETS

100% Virgin Wool

Hold Still! T. Tadda

The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

OUTFIT 277

MARCH 1947

CONTENTS

Portrait of a Canada Lynx—R. W. Harrington 1
Windigo!—J. A. Burgesse 4
First Flying Wing—F. H. Ellis 6
Sidelights on Samuel Hearne—R. G. Glover 10
Northwest Angle—Earl V. Chapin 15
A Whale Is Killed—George Anderson 18
Ogoki River Holiday—James A. Green 22
North Woods Hunting Trip—E. L. Brown 28
Dogs at Churchill—Ted Clymer 30
Nor'westers Invade the Bay—W. S. Wallace 33
Here and There 35
Fastest on Four Feet—Dan McCowan 36
Pullen in Search of Franklin—W. J. S. Pullen 40
Minutes of HBC, 1679-82—C. R. Fay 44
Dangerous Journey—L. J. Kotowich 46
Spring Packet 49

ONE DOLLAR A YEAR

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE — Hudson's Bay Company. — WINNIPEG, CANADA

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

THE BEAVER is published quarterly by the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, commonly known as the Hudson's Bay Company. It is edited at Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg, at the office of the Canadian Committee. Yearly subscription, one dollar; single copies, twenty-five cents. THE BEAVER is entered at the second class postal rate. Its editorial interests include the whole field of travel, exploration and trade in the Canadian North as well as the current activities and historical background of the Hudson's Bay Company, in all its departments throughout Canada. THE BEAVER assumes no liability for unsolicited manuscripts or photographs. Contributions are however solicited, and the utmost care will be taken of all material received. Correspondence on points of historic interest is encouraged. The entire content of THE BEAVER is protected by copyright, but reproduction rights will be given freely upon application. Address: THE BEAVER, Hudson's Bay House, Winnipeg.

The Beaver is printed for the Hudson's Bay Company by Saults & Pollard Limited, Winnipeg, Canada, and the engravings are made by Brigdens of Winnipeg Limited

WINDIGO!

by J. A. Burgesse.

Illustrated by R. Reck

ONE winter evening during the early 1930's, the two members of the post staff at Obijuan, P.Q., were sitting in the living room of the dwelling house. It was growing late and the *commis* was trying to pluck up enough courage to make his round of inspection before turning in. It needed more than ordinary courage, for a stiff, snow-laden wind whistled in off the lake, making the old paper-covered roof groan, and thrusting probing fingers between the interstices of the windows. It was difficult to quit the old stove whose rosy rotundity represented the epitome of comfort in such forbidding weather.

The clerk's musings were abruptly interrupted, however, by a sudden cry and a staccato drumming upon the outer door, which, in almost the same instant, burst open and tumbled a shapeless form onto the kitchen floor. *Otsima* and *Commis* were on their feet, startled eyes on the apparition. As the clerk threw his weight on the door, cutting off the icy blast, the cause of the disturbance slowly arose from the floor and revealed the half-frozen, fear-livid face of Mattawa, the old shaman, and the most troublesome member of the band. He raised a pair of terrified eyes, uttered one word—"Windigo"—and fainted dead away.

A good stiff dose of camphor tea soon brought him back to life and, after he had had a good meal and recovered from his fright, the old man related his story.

It appeared that earlier in the evening he had been alone in his tent, located a mile or so from the post, when he heard a peculiar noise outside. On looking through the doorway, he perceived an indistinct figure which appeared to be hammering on a canoe laid up for the winter a short distance away. Thinking that it was one of his fellow hunters who had stopped by, en route to the post, Mattawa called a greeting and went out to meet him. Drawing closer, however, he saw that it was a white man dressed, as he put it, "in his Sunday clothes," and not in the usual garb of the woodlands. Mattawa halted and called out, "*Qu' est-ce que tu veux, toi?*" (You there, what do you want?) The stranger glanced up, but did not utter a word. Indian and white man looked at one another for what the hunter, who was getting scared, thought to be a long time, and then the visitor just wasn't there any more. He had disappeared into thin air. The Indian was convinced that he had seen a "Windigo" and lost no time in fleeing to the safety of the trading post, not waiting even to dress himself in warm clothing.

His terror was very real, and nothing would induce him to return to his camp that night. Next morning the clerk accompanied him and helped him transfer his belongings to the village. There were no footprints in the snow around the canoe!

The *otsima* (manager) dismissed the apparition as a figment of the Indian's imagination. He was a testy, practical little man, a good trader and not disliked by the natives, though he knew nothing of their more intimate customs and had no patience with anything he could not explain. "These confounded nitchies," he was wont to exclaim, "are lazy, greedy good-for-nothings. They'll cook up any stupid tale to get their bellies full or skip their debts. Heaven knows why I entered the fur trade!"

Despite the scepticism of his superior, the *commis* was intrigued by Mattawa's story and the Indian's real terror. He was curious to learn more about this Windigo, for it seemed strange that one old man, real or imaginary, should have caused a hunter to abandon all his equipment and flee. However, it was not until the following spring, when the post hunters had returned from the woods, that a little more light was thrown on the mystery.

One day Awashish turned up and related how his canoe had almost been swamped by a Windigo, this time under the form of a horse, which had tried to climb aboard in the middle of a lake. His brother Pisk, who had been in the canoe, corroborated the story. Unlike Mattawa, however, the two brothers did not appear to be particularly scared. On the contrary, they considered themselves rather fine fellows for having bested a Windigo, and boasted about the exploit.

It was Iserhoff, the post interpreter, who filled in the details of the picture one afternoon when he and the clerk were safely ensconced in the oil house, well hidden from the *otsima's* eye. Though the interpreter confessed that he, himself, had never seen a Windigo, he knew lots of Indians who had; and once, a long time ago, his own father had been chased by one. Nowadays, he said, it is not always easy to recognize a Windigo, which is a very evil spirit, for it manifests itself under many different forms. In the olden days, however, it had always been a sort of giant, of a stature exceeding all imagination. For a staff it used a tall

"Awashish related how his canoe had almost been swamped by a Windigo."

pine tree, and each of its moccasins was as big as a canoe of twenty places. In one stride it covered a distance equal to a day's journey, and this made it very difficult for the Indians to escape. It lay in wait in the deep woods and pounced upon any unfortunate hunter who happened by, cracking his bones as easily as the twigs of a long dead tamarack. This was all that Iserhoff knew about the Windigo, but he believed every word of it.

In later years the clerk encountered similar tales in many different parts of the northland, which is besprinkled with Windigo Lakes, Windigo Mountains and Windigo Rivers. Everywhere the main theme is the same, though minor details may vary—a malignant spirit pursues and devours the Indian—but nowhere did any of those questioned seem to be able to tell why the Windigo pursued the hunters. There was no defense against it except flight, and the various propitiatory rites practised to appease the spirit of the woods had no effect on the Windigo. All of which the clerk found most curious, for, over the years, he had found that Indian tales, seemingly stupid and meaningless on the surface, had hidden meanings when examined closely and either explained natural phenomena or were linked up with the religio-magic of animism. Somewhere, he felt, there must be an explanation of the Windigo.

What might be a clue was furnished by the journal of Joseph Laurent Normandin, a French surveyor who visited the Saguenay region of Quebec in 1732 to determine the boundaries of the King's Domain. Normandin noted down the minutest details of his journey and, commenting on a river which the Indians called AtchemeSchip8* (Giant River), he had this to say:

> These people have such a fear of giants that almost every day they believe that they see some of them. They affirm that an *atcheme* is an extra-ordinarily tall man and that he eats Indians. These people are so confirmed in their opinion that some years ago, when a woman pretended that she wanted to become an *atcheme* and said so to a number of Chicoutimi Indians, telling them that she would eat them all up, one named Matatache, who is still living, laid hold of this woman, tied a rope around her neck, dragged her to a rock which is a quarter of a league from Chicoutimi, below the said post, on the River Saguenay, and broke her head with an axe. This is why, since then, this rock bears the name of "Rocher de la Bonne Femme."

This tale seemed to indicate that the Windigo is a transformed human, a sort of werewolf, for amongst the Montagnais the words *atcheme* and *windigo* seem to be synonymous.

The remaining piece of the puzzle was found at another Quebec post which, for reasons which the reader will understand, cannot be identified, and when fitted into place revealed a clear picture of the Windigo in all its stark reality. It was at this particular post that our clerk encountered a Windigo. There was nothing dramatic about the meeting. In fact it was not until later that the seemingly ordinary half-breed hunter was revealed as one of these malignant spirits. The only remarkable thing about him was that he was avoided by his fellows. The Indians were polite enough to him and did not appear to bear him any particular animosity, yet when he turned up at the post, the store emptied itself of Indians. He never hunted with an Indian family and his trapping companions were always whites, or halfbreeds who had adopted the white man's ways.

His ostracism originated in an adventure in which he took an active part when still little more than a boy.

"In the olden days, it had always been a sort of giant, of a stature exceeding all imagination."

He and his brother accompanied their father into the woods for a winter's hunting. In the spring, before the break-up, their provisions began to run low, so the father set off alone to obtain some from a cache he had made in the autumn at a point some miles downstream from the winter camp. The break-up caught him en route and he was found, half dead from starvation, by a passing Indian, who rushed him down to the post. It was only several days later, when he had recovered somewhat, that he could reveal the plight in which he had left his sons. A rescue party set out immediately, but when it arrived at the camp one boy only remained. A pile of picked bones was all that remained of the brother. It was never established whether or not a murder had been committed and the boy was given the benefit of the doubt. To the Indians, however, it was evident that they had a Windigo in their midst.

The veracity of the story was easily confirmed and the clerk realized that, at last, he had the answer to the mystery which had intrigued him for so many years. Cannibalism, that worst of human crimes, was the secret. So strong is the natural law which sanctifies the human frame as the temple of the soul, that even the untutored savage regarded any desecration of it with horror. Yet the woods were not kind to the Red Man. It is true that they provided him with the means of subsistence but in return they took their toll. The registers of the missionaries and the records of the explorers which have been bequeathed to us from the early days of the colony are full of bitter tales. Scarcely a year passed but a hunter, a family, or an entire band perished from hunger in the woods.

Starvation, then, was the malignant spectre which stalked the lonely hunter, metamorphosing him into a horrible anthropophagite who preyed upon his fellows. Tales of horror are not quickly forgotten, and can we wonder that the Red Man had conjured the memory of his people's misery into the legend of the Giant Windigo?

* The symbol 8 was used, during the French Colonial period, to render a sound midway between "u" and "ou" in French. When used between vowels it is usually replaced by "w" in English texts.
**Nowadays known as "Rocher de la Vieille."

FIRST FLYING WING

by Frank H. Ellis

The story of an attempt to conquer the air made by three ingenious farmers of Alberta in 1907-8

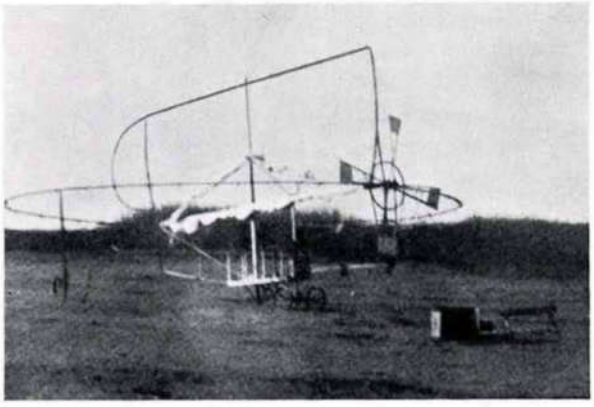
"Let brisker youths their active nerves prepare,
Fit their light silken wings and skim the buxom air."

ALTHOUGH we can only surmise at this late date as to whether the above lines from the poem, "Scriblerad," were the wishes or the prophecy of its English composer, Richard Owen Cambridge, (for the words were written in 1751) one thing is certain: when flight was conquered at last, many young men of active nerves who fitted their light silken wings to skim the buxom air "wore" such flimsy contraptions that today we look at the pictures and shudder at what we see. We know now that only the strongest nerves could have flown, or attempted to fly, on such weak wings.

During the very early flying era, power to sustain a man in the air in even a small light-built machine was one of the items so many inventors lacked. As a consequence, they were forced to cast about for ways and means of designing a heavier-than-air craft which might weigh little, yet still be strong enough to withstand the strain when carrying its master in flight and using an engine of only meagre horse-power. Large and powerful engines were impossible to obtain in the early days, and even when such motors did make their appearance, their cost was up in the thousands of dollars. This effectively prevented many a hard up yet clever inventor ever trying a full-fledged flight. Maybe it had its points at that, because many have survived to tell the tale.

The lack of sufficient power had its evils too, as it forced many a designer to construct an airplane which was far too flimsy and light, with practically no safety factor. History shows that many of these machines which ever actually lifted into the air collapsed with the first real strain, and the "brisk youth" at the helm found himself going straight down, to survive or die, depending entirely on how high he had managed to ascend before the "silken wings" gave way.

In the year 1872, a western Canadian farmer named John K. Underwood, of inventive mind, cast about for a better means of tilling his wide acres more thoroughly than by means of the old style ploughshares he owned. After many tests with various designs, he evolved, and that year took out, the first patents on the disc plough, which still bears his name, and which today is a popular implement with farmers throughout the entire North American continent.



The Underwood machine standing on its "airstrip" in 1908. Note the belt drive. The canvas surfaces are shown furled, like the sails of ships.

Not only was he the proud father of the Underwood disc plough, but also of several fine sons, who, carrying on in their dad's footsteps, became farmers as the years passed, working the wide farm lands situated along the Krugerville road, several miles out from the thriving northern Alberta town of Stettler.

All of the sons inherited their father's inventive ability, and when the news trickled through in 1903-4 that the Wright brothers had really accomplished a number of flights, the young Underwoods, George, John and Elmer, began to think and talk of how grand it must be to fly through the air. As the next few years slipped by, and the news of the flights in Europe also were verified, they mustered their thoughts into action.

Before they actually began their models, and later work on a full scale machine, they endeavoured to obtain information which might be of help, but their efforts met with dismal failure. Publications on the subject just were not available, particularly in northern Alberta, so they set to with a will to design a craft entirely to their own ideas.

At that time nothing was known about aerodynamics, nor the lifting effect on a wing due to the upper surface vacuum, but the young men managed to pick up an article which was a treatise on the subject of flight, written by an eminent mathematician, Simon Nucomb, and on it they pinned their hopes to build an airplane which would fly.

Nucomb proved in theory that it would be impossible to build a plane large enough to carry a man in flight, because its surface would increase as the square of the dimension, while its weight would increase as the cube of the dimension. Apparently the article had been written before the Wrights flew, but it seemed logical enough, and he stated that a small kite could undoubtedly be made which would still be strong enough to lift twenty-five pounds or so, but that would be just about the limit.

Probably many would-be inventors studied the laws as outlined by Nucomb, and gave up in despair, but it had the reverse effect on the three persistent Albertans. They cast about for ways and means of constructing a machine which would have strength and lightness, and yet could be kept within the laws and limits outlined by Nucomb.

Their experiments began on May 14, 1907, with tests of a rectangular, tailless kite, eight feet across; a few days later they were out in the wind again,

testing one of a similar type, but with a twenty-foot span. Each of these kites was in actuality, a flying wing, and each possessed a centre jib, or fin, which projected vertically from front to rear in the centre of the wing itself. Under actual test, the fin gave the kites great stability, and George Underwood makes no bones about telling how they cribbed the idea from a brother-in-law, Charles R. Haas, who had worked out a similar idea when conducting kite flying experiments several years before.

Models then were made in an effort to find out the most suitable design, and these models were flown distances up to 150 yards with the use of elastic bands, or a weight. The one fitted with a weight for propeller power was first sent aloft as a kite, then, as it was cut loose, the falling weight swiftly rotated the propeller, carrying it on some creditable flights, which thrilled the young men greatly, and urged them on towards the construction of their full-sized machine.

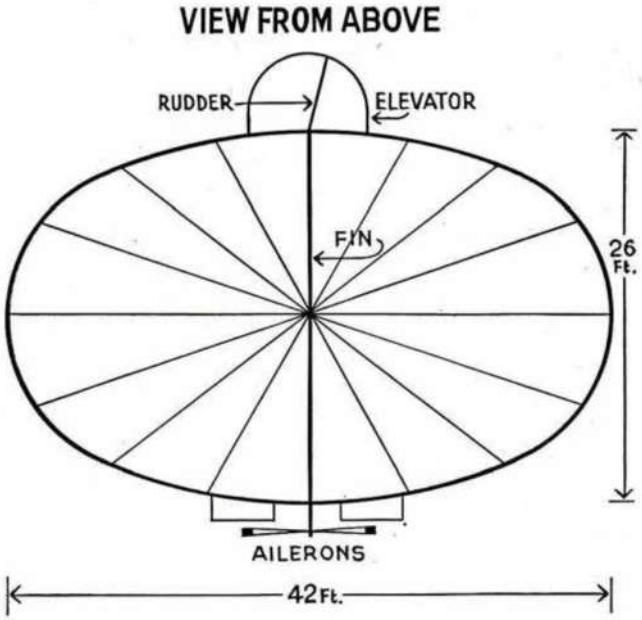
Great ingenuity went into the design and construction of the big craft, and occasionally their father would lend a hand when some particularly knotty problem developed.

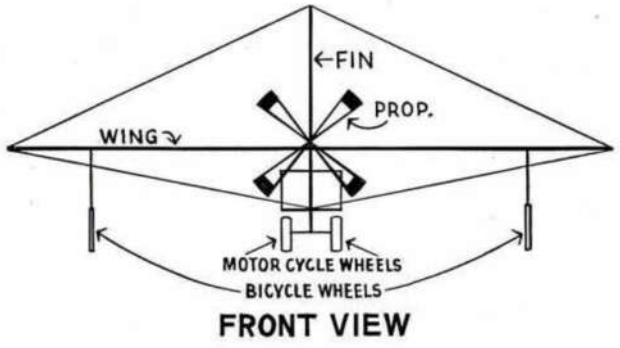
Today the plane would definitely come under the flying wing class, as it had no fuselage or tail of any kind, and the Underwoods, and Canada, surely deserve credit as the original designers of a flying wing. The year being 1907, predates any other type even remotely similar. When completed it weighed some 450 pounds and had a lifting surface of 900 square feet.

The wing framework was elliptical in design, 42 feet from tip to tip, with a fore and aft span of 26 feet at the centre. The outer circle of the wing was of laminated fir strips 5x1¼ inches, and from a centre hub wire spokes went out to the laminated rim, something after the style of a bicycle wheel. Turnbuckles on each spoke made accurate adjustments possible, allowing for perfect alignment of the entire wing. A man could stand on the outer wooden rim at any point and jump up and down upon it without warping or damaging it in any way.

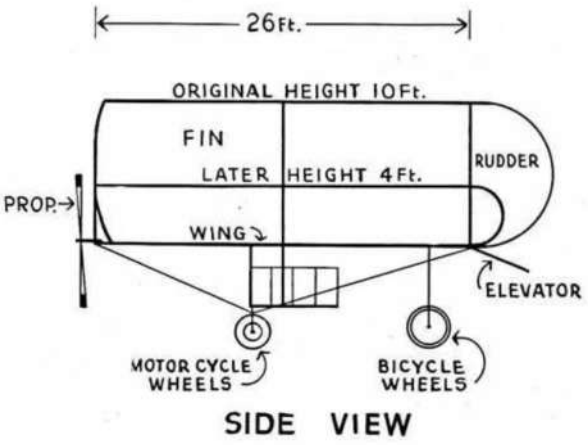
The centre post, or hub, was fashioned from a 12-foot length of 4 by 4 cedar, and a small platform for the operator and the engine was built on the lower section of the hub post. Below the platform, attached to a rigid axle, were two sturdy motorcycle wheels, and to the laminated rim, towards each wing tip, bicycle wheels were suitably attached, so that they could turn free on a castor, giving great handling facility on the ground.

The fin, or jib previously mentioned, as originally fitted, was a high affair, ten feet above the wing at its centre, but later experiments proved that it was far too large, and it was cut down to a height of four feet. Rudder and elevator frameworks were hinged to the fin and wing at the rear, and two small hinged frameworks protruded in front of the wing, close to either side of its centre. Inventor John, who is now a teacher in a northern California college, told me recently that the two front control surfaces could be operated singly or in unison, and he thought that maybe they could be designated as the first of all ailerons; but such a claim might well start an old controversy going again, which has had flying circles in a dither many a time. The surfaces on the front of the Underwood machine were really too close to the wing centre to be classed as wing tip controls, or ailerons, as their position would give them more of a longitudinal controlling effect; but being controllable as separate units, they





These diagrams show the principles of construction of the Underwood "flying wing". They are based on sketches made for the author by John Underwood.



The partly assembled aircraft being hauled along the main street of Stettler, Alberta, in August 1907, on its way to the exhibition. Note the ailerons behind the propellor and the semicircular fin, which was much too high.

could have had some effect in keeping a plane on an even lateral keel. However, we have no need to worry for fear the Dominion will lose on the claim for the invention of ailerons, because the first plane ever flown in Canada, the *Silver Dart*, which was piloted by our own John McCurdy in February 1909, had the first ailerons to work up and down at the pilot's will, and being fitted to each wing tip, they have gone down in recorded history as the first to be used in successful flight anywhere in the world.

All lifting and control surfaces of the Underwood machine were covered with a light canvas, held firmly in place with numerous lengths of thin cord, which were first sewed to the canvas, and later tied tightly to their various frameworks.

By the middle of June 1907, the main work on the big craft was completed, and the directors of the Stettler exhibition, hearing of its construction, invited the builders to display their handiwork at the fair grounds. This they gladly agreed to do.

The machine had not yet received its wheels, but, nothing daunted, the brothers placed its centre post on a wooden stoneboat, and lashing the whole thing firmly behind a farm wagon, the three set off over miles of bumpy road. When at last they reached Stettler, their invention went on public display, beginning on July 1st, and it proved to be quite an attraction, receiving much favourable comment. As a matter of cold fact, the news spread rapidly, and even in far away Toronto, an item appeared in the *Globe*, dated August 6, 1907, stating that the Krugerville "balloon" was completed, and that it had a "gas bag 300 feet in length."

A Winnipeg newspaper evidently had the "gas bag length" slightly mixed up with engine power, and, not to be outdone by the Toronto paper, they published the fact that the Underwood machine was equipped with "500 horse-power."

The newspapers closer to home, however, were a bit more in the know, and therefore somewhat more conservative. The *Stettler Independent*, which still publishes, headlined it as "Stettler's Aeroplane," and the Edmonton newspapers were only a bit off the beam when they described it as "Alberta's Airship."

Enthusiastic promoters, dreaming of easy money, even began to circularize the suggestion that a special train might be run to Stettler to see the trial flights.

During the exhibition, a comment expressed by one of Alberta's highest government officials must not be overlooked. After examining the plane's "skeleton," he remarked to John Underwood, who was standing near by: "Young man, you have missed one very important principle in your airship. You know a bird's feathers have hollow quills, and when the quills warm, the air they contain becomes lighter and helps to buoy him up."

When the exhibition concluded, the tedious job of hauling the framework back over the ten miles of rugged road to their own pastures was accomplished, and they went to work in earnest to complete their craft.

Owing to the lack of an engine, they were at first obliged to test the "flying wing" as a kite. They did this by laying out seven hundred feet of quarter-inch rope along the ground, fastening one end to a stout fence post and the other to the nose of the machine.

The first actual kite-flying test took place on August 10, 1907. The stability of the wing was remarkable, while the high degree of lift it exerted in a twenty-mile breeze was amazing. Five sacks of wheat were placed on the "cockpit" platform, and they were taken aloft with ease. Then John, who was twenty-two at the time, asked that he replace the bags of grain and be sent up to the hundred foot altitude they had reached. This his two brothers flatly refused to do, thinking more of his neck than he did himself, but he at last prevailed upon them to use a shorter rope length so that the "kite" would not go too high, and taking his place on the platform, he was lifted gently

some ten feet off the ground. He sat there swaying smoothly back and forth for some fifteen minutes, before the apparatus was again brought down to earth.

As harvest, and then threshing operations, crowded upon their time, further experiments had to be put aside until the following spring. By that time they had procured a seven-horse-power motor-cycle engine on which they pinned their hopes to fly, and after some fancy figuring, they coupled it up with a belt drive to the four-bladed wood-and-canvas propeller. This prop. had a ten-foot diameter, and was fitted at the nose of the machine—if it could be described as having had a nose. As might be expected, the prop. was inefficient, and with the inadequate power available, the wing just could not be induced to get off the ground. They had a site prepared for these endeavours, and with its smooth surface they had little difficulty in taxiing about at a fair speed, but success in the air with that engine was not to be theirs.

An interesting sidelight is worthy of mention with regard to their air field. They laid out a regular "air strip" along a field of summerfallow, close by the side of the Krugerville road, twenty rods wide and eighty rods long. When completed, its surface was as smooth as any strip today. Unfortunately, no plane ever took off or landed on its hard rolled smoothness, but it can still rate as the Dominion's first air strip, unless anyone knows of a better one of an earlier date.

When it was found that their motor lacked the necessary horsepower, they cast about to obtain a better one. Enquiries were sent to the Curtiss motor cycle shop at Hammondsport, N.Y., asking for quotations on an engine of eight cylinders and forty horsepower, and they were informed that the cost would be $1300.

Interest in the Underwoods' efforts was high in Alberta. If one wishes to look the matter up, it will be found that their local member of the federal parliament actually took up the matter in Ottawa, suggesting that a bill be instituted to allow any motor they bought in the States to be imported into Canada duty free. That the measure never got any further is a pity; it might have set a precedent which would stand Canadian airlines in good stead today.

Although the cost of the engine was not too prohibitive as things were in those days, it was steep enough to make the Underwoods think things over, and they at last came to the conclusion that, as many of the best prizes offered for various flying achievements were being snapped up, the expense would not be worth the candle. Reluctantly they decided just to go along flying their craft as a kite.

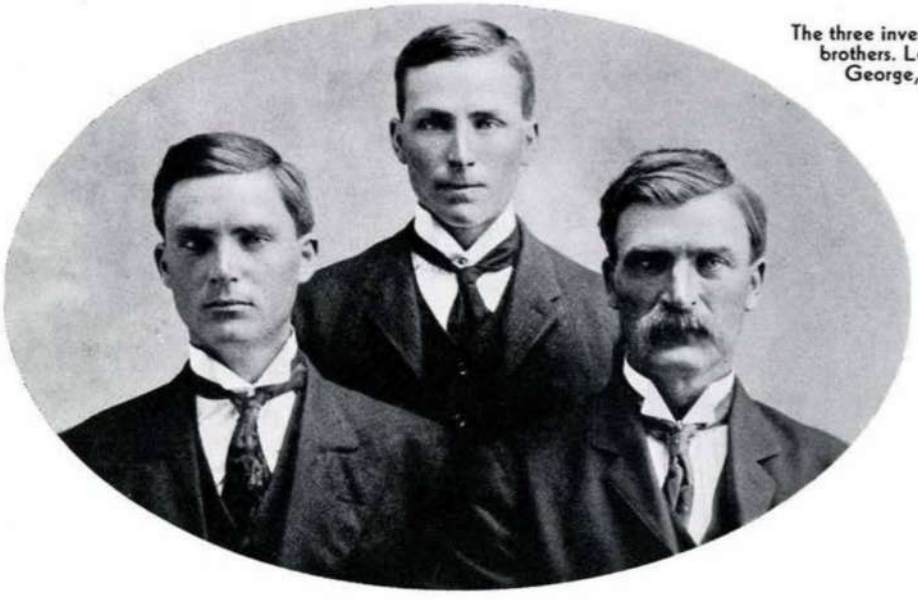
During the spring and the summer of 1908 their huge "bird" was seen aloft at the end of its tether by many farmers of the district, and even at night, when the winds were in their favour, they would send it up, with a lantern swinging beneath. The weird light bobbing around in the sky over the Krugerville area caused much comment, and not a little alarm to many with a superstitious bent.

As time passed, they got a little careless in the way they handled the kite, and one day, in a particularly strong wind, the barbed wire they were using in lieu of a rope became tangled. As the kite lifted, a kink snapped, and their brain child rolled over along the ground a number of times, getting badly smashed in the process.

The brothers could well have repaired it had they wished, but apparently the novelty of flying it as a kite had palled, and the possibility of ever trying it out with an engine having evaporated, they just piled it up in a heap. The passing years carried its remains into oblivion.

The Underwoods never worked secretly, as many aircraft inventors were forced, or preferred to do, in the pioneer era, but they never went out of their way to seek notoriety, and except for their one splurge at the Stettler exhibition, which enabled many hundreds of persons to see their machine, it is probable that their efforts would have vanished without a trace. The fact that their craft never made a controlled, free flight, under its own power, should not be allowed to detract from the pioneer work accomplished by the Underwoods. In the year 1907, flight by man in heavier-than-air machines was very much in its infancy, and no one, other than the Wright Brothers, had accomplished officially recognized controlled flight at any point in the western hemisphere, while only the year before had the first official flight of an airplane been made in the eastern hemisphere.

The flying models made by the Underwoods proved beyond all doubt that their ideas were good and that the design was airworthy, and later, the stability and powerful lift the full-sized machine exerted was amply demonstrated in the many tests they conducted when flying the apparatus as a kite. It is quite apparent therefore, that Canada and the Empire probably lost an early start in conquering the air when the Underwood boys decided to give up their endeavours to fly and remained content just to carry on "flying a kite."



The three inventive Underwood brothers. Left to right: John, George, Elmer.

Sidelights on S^{L}Hearne

by Richard G. Glover

NO discussion of the exploration of the Barrens goes very far without the name of Hearne cropping up; his journeys, hardships and discoveries are famous. But what sort of man was this indomitable traveller? It is astonishing that some modern critics have represented him as a pliant weakling, even a poltroon. Their civilian minds have not always comprehended the circumstances in which he surrendered the fort at Churchill to the French on a late summer day in 1782. "Hearne, mightier with the pen than the sword, surrendered meekly enough in spite of his massive walls, thirty to forty feet thick. Thus ingloriously he dies out of history," wrote one fire-eating critic. But this condemnation's only basis is unimaginative ignorance. Hearne's garrison numbered only thirty-nine; six times that number would hardly have sufficed to provide crews for the forty guns or guards for the four hundred yards of wall and bastion at Fort Prince of Wales. The fortress was—let us tell the truth—a very bad one. The walls, though thick, were weak, because built with bad mortar; Moses Norton, the old governor, had insisted on having the embrasures (through which the guns are fired) made to a bad pattern, and a faulty embrasure means an ineffective gun; a moat was an essential feature of contemporary fortification and Fort Prince of Wales had none. Without it the seventeen-foot high walls would be only too easily scaled with ladders in a silent night attack. But the fort's crowning weakness is revealed in a note written by Andrew Graham in 1771: "No springs near; drink snow water nine months of the year. In summer keep three draught horses to haul water & draw stones." One would have thought that even a civilian intelligence could grasp that a waterless fortress was incapable of defence; and this note of Graham's is printed in the same volume as the above quoted slur on Hearne's courage. Such criticism makes the critic, not Hearne, look cheap.

Samuel Hearne's portrait from the "European Magazine", June 1797. It is captioned: "Mr. Samuel Hearne late Cheif at Prince of Wales's Fort, Hudson's Bay." David Thompson describes him as "a handsome man of six feet in height, of a ruddy complexion and remarkably well made."

Another critic apparently thinks Hearne should have prevented his Indian companions from massacring the Eskimos at the Bloody Falls where "he perhaps rather weakly yielded to the force of circumstances"; yet another complains that "he had not the force of character possessed by Mackenzie . . . he could not control his Indians" as Mackenzie controlled his hard driven men. These comments show a strange mixture of unimaginativeness and unconscious acceptance of the "master race" belief in the legendary white man, who dresses for dinner in the bush and has the natives running right, left and centre at his bidding. As to the first, it will be recalled that after the fall of Fort William Henry in August 1757, Montcalm could not prevent his Indians from massacring the English prisoners; to expect Hearne to succeed single-handed, where Montcalm with a whole French army at his back failed, smacks of absurdity. As to the second, Professor Morton has pointed out that Mackenzie's prime dependence was not on Indians, but on white men who were working for regular wages and therefore amenable to discipline, while Hearne was wholly dependent on Indians who had never acknowledged subordination to any authority above themselves and whose fulfilment of their own promises was too often dependent on the whim of the moment. But what traveller has got better results out of the Chipewyan Indian than he? Neither Warburton Pike, J. B. Tyrrell nor E. T. Seton got much satisfaction from reliance on these people; Hearne made his journey and returned with his copper samples with no other guidance or assistance than the Indians. To succeed with a people whom later travellers dismiss as useless is the mark of a very practical realist.

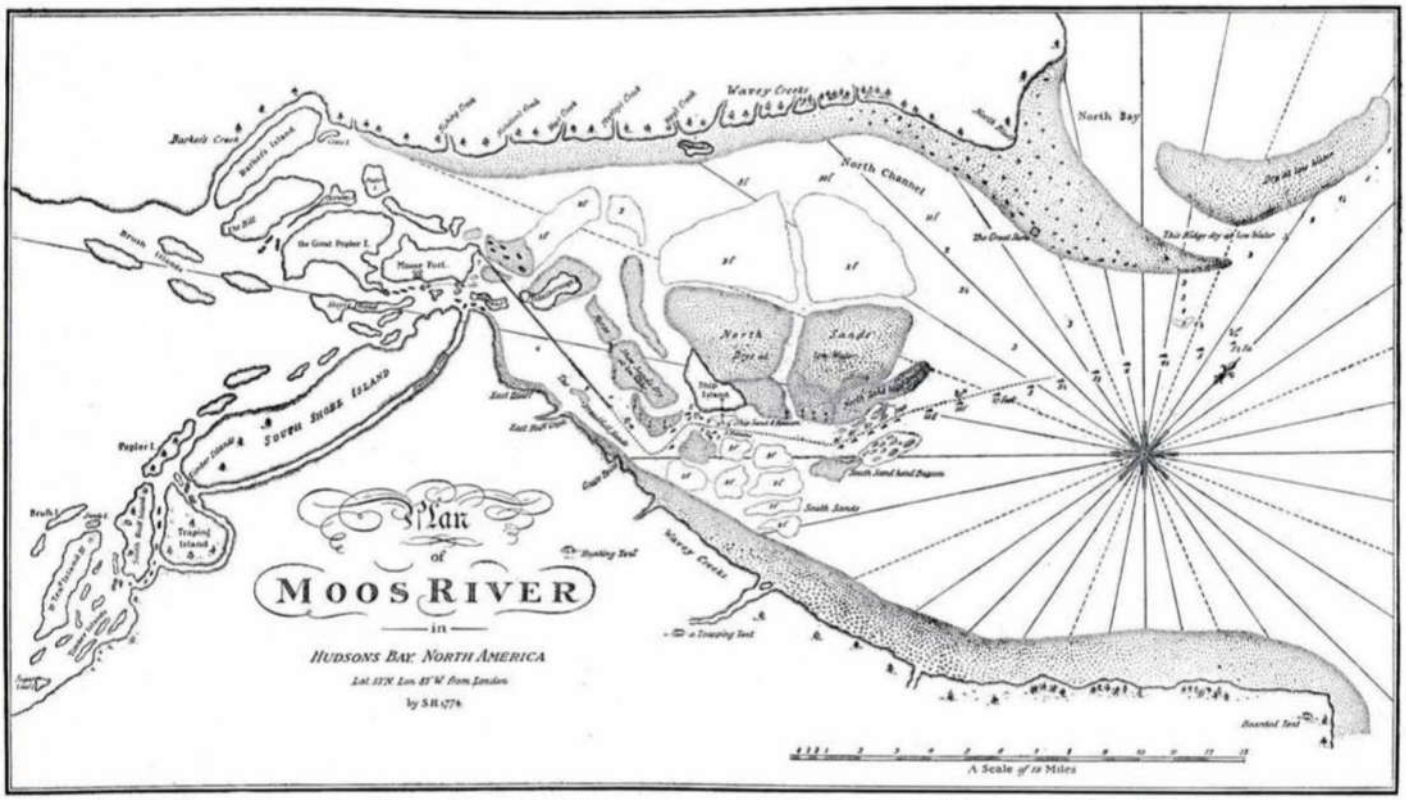
Hearne's name carved on a rock at Sloop's Cove near Churchill. The young ladies included in the picture give the scale. Left to right: Miss Sarah Powell, nurse, and Mrs. J. Osborne, now both of Pangnirtung.
G. Hunter for Natl. Film Board.

Hearne's civilian critics would do well to remember that he had a good war record and his surrender to the French Admiral La Pérouse is the decision of a man who had seen service, and may be credited with some knowledge of what can and cannot be done in war. He had joined the navy at the outbreak of the Seven Years War in 1756, when only eleven years old (there is nothing new in our modern demand for young officers), and served "some years" under that great seaman Samuel Hood (in Nelson's later opinion "the best officer, take him altogether, that England had to boast of"). In the earlier war years Hood was mainly employed in the Channel and the Bay of Biscay, but from 1760 on he was almost continuously in the Mediterranean. A reference in Hearne's book to the appearance of Spanish Lines at Gibraltar would suggest he was still with Hood in 1760. Hearne's obituary speaks of his being in "a very warm engagement soon after he entered"—this was no doubt Hood's once famous ship-to-ship action of May 14, 1757, against the fifty-gun Frenchman, *Aquilon*, which he drove ashore on the Brittany coast a total wreck. Hood obviously liked young Hearne—he kept him with him "some years" (which would involve several moves from ship to ship), treated him with "every indulgence," and arranged for his prize money to be sent home to his mother; as Hood had an unusual reputation for skill, vigour, and intolerance of inefficiency, his regard is a testimonial of some value.

Lack of opportunity in the peacetime navy brought Hearne to the Hudson's Bay Company as a youthful war veteran of about twenty. The Company first made use of his sea-going experience by employing him as mate of the *Churchill*, a sloop used for trading with the Eskimos; in 1768 he was out whaling in the *Speedwell;* in 1769 he became mate of the Company's "fine brig of 100 tons," the *Charlotte*. This last job was a hard disappointment. He had applied to the London Committee for the command of the *Charlotte*, but Governor Moses Norton (probably) had put over him as captain a Mr. Joseph Stephens who impressed Hearne as "a man of the least merit I ever knew"—a sad come-down after Lord Hood. It is, then, not surprising that, after a summer on the *Charlotte* with Stephens, he "did not hesitate to comply with the request of the Company" that he should seek the Coppermine in the autumn of '69. The London Committee promised him the command of the *Charlotte* on his return, and there is no reason to doubt that this promise was fulfilled.

In 1773, the first summer after his journeys, Hearne was evidently at sea surveying the harbours of James Bay, as his book contains plans of the Moose and Albany rivers signed "S. H. 1774." These are not maps of ground but seamen's charts of channels, shoals, soundings and landmarks, and Hearne cannot have done the necessary surveying before 1773, since his early summers on the Bay had been spent in northern waters. On his return to Churchill, Hearne received orders to proceed inland to oppose the Montreal traders, whose activities had lately been reported by Matthew Cocking, but the lateness of the season prevented his getting further than York Factory, where he wintered. There we catch a glimpse of him shooting golden plover with the surgeon and Ferdinand Jacobs, the governor —they "killed in one afternoon as many as two men could conveniently carry." Life would certainly be pleasanter there than at Churchill, where the overbearing halfbreed governor had put his spite on Hearne because he had firmly refused to take any of his worthless Cree relations on the third Coppermine expedition.

Saying good-bye to the sea next spring, Hearne followed Cocking's trail to found Cumberland House, whence he was recalled twelve months later to take command of Churchill on Norton's death. He was just thirty, and the Churchill command was the biggest job the Company had to offer. As he travelled there, men were growing hungry in far-off Boston, where numbers of persecuted Loyalists and five thousand British troops were facing their seventh month of siege.



Hearne's chart of the mouth of Moose River, 1774. The present post of Moose Factory is a little up stream from the site shown here.

Had Hearne known of the troubles now beginning in New England, he still could not have foreseen what misfortunes were to be their consequence for him.

Few careers are complete without a love story. At Churchill Hearne succumbed to the charms of Moses Norton's daughter Mary, of whom he writes a moving epitaph, quoting Waller's verses,

"But now removed from all the ills of life
Here rests the pleasing friend & faithful wife."

Mary, evidently, was astonishingly unlike her father, as unpleasing an old polygamist as ever was. In 1775 she was fifteen, quite marriageable by halfbreed standards, and, even if she was not Hearne's only consolation, her death shook his religion—"reason shrinks from . . . accounting for the Decrees of Providence on such occasions as this," he wrote.

Meanwhile the colonial revolution that began when Hearne was at Cumberland had grown into a great war, with Britain standing alone against the world's maritime powers. 1779 saw a Franco-Spanish fleet commanding the Channel, and an invasion crisis which almost makes 1803 and 1940 seem idle flaps; in West Indian waters Hearne's old captain, Lord Hood (a rear-admiral now), enhanced his reputation, while down south Cornwallis swept victoriously through the Carolinas, only to be trapped by the over-powering force of Washington's Frenchmen at Yorktown; in India, too, native princes with French support were vigorously, though vainly, attacking the hard-pressed British. Even the Bay's remoteness offered no security in these desperate days. With many privateers at large, the annual ship was awaited each August with tenser anxiety; especially the national crisis was felt in scarcity of labour. In 1771 there had been "60 servants and tradesmen" at Churchill; during the war Hearne never had more than 53, in 1782 only 39. That year, too, brought La Pérouse to destroy this bleakest outpost of a too-thinly defended empire. He seized the furs, blew up the fort and sailed away, taking the Englishmen as prisoners and leaving dusky Mary with her Indian relations, who callously let her starve to death.

1783 brought to England the bitter Peace of Versailles, and to Hearne liberty. However critics may damn his conduct today, his employers (who doubtless knew more about it) had no complaint against him but sent him back to rebuild Churchill—a new timber fort further upstream. It was then that he heard of Mary's death. Ill health at last made him resign his command and leave the Bay in 1787.

Though the juvenile David Thompson disliked him, Hearne appears to have been a good commander of men. Such at least is the opinion one would form from his boast, "notwithstanding the length of the Winter, the severity of the cold and the great scarcity of vegetables at this Northern settlement, by proper attention to cleanliness and keeping the people at reasonable exercise, I have never had one man under me who had the least symptom of scurvy." Here, if it were needed, is evidence of Hearne's force of character; it takes a good deal of discipline to make some men keep themselves and their quarters clean, and more to make them take exercise in sub-zero weather; but Hearne's men did both. His object, as well as his success, stamps him as a good commander. He is, of course, wrong in supposing that mere exercise and cleanliness were any good against scurvy, but indirectly the exercise no doubt did the trick; for we may guess from another of Andrew Graham's terse notes on life on the Bay—"Killing of partridges the most pleasant duty"—that exercise meant hunting, and fresh meat does prevent scurvy. The old-timers on the Bay have owed a lot to the willow ptarmigan.

A sailor on active service at eleven, Hearne had had little time for schooling, and that little is said to have

been misspent. Yet somehow he picked up a rare education. His lively curiosity gathered information on an unusual range of topics, he gives hints of varied reading, and his clear intelligence expressed itself in very clear, natural English, enlivened with a gentle irony that most professional writers might envy. It would for instance be hard to improve on the way he touches off an unscrupulous journalist's description of the beaver: "He has not only collected all the fictions into which other writers on the subject have run, but has so greatly improved on them that little remains to be added to his account of the beaver, beside a vocabulary of their language, a code of their laws and a sketch of their religion to make it the most complete natural history . . . which can possibly be offered to the public."

Hearne's own description of the beaver is a first rate piece of critical writing and accurate observation; and it is interesting to find that a century and a half before audiences of "city-slickers" were to gape at Grey Owl's success in taming beaver, Hearne was keeping them as pets. He "kept several . . . till they became so domesticated as to answer to their name . . . and follow as a dog would do; and they were as pleased at being fondled as any animal I ever saw. I had a house built for them & a small piece of water before the door into which they always plunged when they wanted to relieve nature . . . so they made not the least dirt, though they were kept in my own sitting room. . . . In general during the winter they lived on the same food as the women did and were remarkably fond of rice & plum pudding." (One of Grey Owl's beavers, it will be recalled, earned the name of "Jelly Roll.") Hearne has no complaint to make of the bad habit pet beavers generally have of chewing off the legs of chairs and tables; was he an unusually successful animal trainer—or remarkably careless of his furniture?

The above quotation illustrates a side of Hearne's character that has received little attention—his love of animals. With all animals, from lemmings to moose, he is interested in the possibility of making pets of them. He devotes a special footnote to telling the fate of a tame moose calf killed by wolves; and hints that this great deer could be domesticated. Mink, fisher, muskrats, red squirrels, ground squirrels and Arctic foxes all provided Hearne with pets. The mink were not a success—"their overfondness made them troublesome as they were always in the way & their so frequently emitting a disagreeable smell [i.e. when frightened] made them quite disgusting"; fisher, on the other hand, he says are "easily . . . domesticated, are very fond of tea leaves, have a pleasant musky smell and are very playful." The red squirrels were a little disappointing—"though several of them became so familiar as to take anything out of my hand & sit on the table where I was writing & play with the pens &c, yet they never would bear to be handled & were very mischievous, gnawing the chair bottoms, window curtains, sashes &c." Ground squirrels were better—"they . . . soon become very fond; by degrees they will bear handling as well as a cat; are exceedingly cleanly, very playful & by no means so restless & impatient of confinement as the Common Squirrel."

Hearne evidently had an unusual way with animals, yet there were limits to the fondness with which he thought they should be treated. When he writes, "one of the Company's servants, whose name is Isaac Batt, willing to be as great a brute as his Indian companions, absolutely forced one of his wives, who had recently lost her infant, to suckle a young bear," his disgust can still be felt after a century and a half. This practice was apparently not uncommon among the Crees, but Hearne took the old-fashioned view that that was no way to treat a woman, even if she had a "tawny hide."

Perhaps these quotations about Hearne and his animals do show a weakness in his make-up—a need to give and receive affection. He was certainly a sensitive and sympathetic character who loathed the brutality of savage life. Matonabbee's beating to death of an impertinent wife, his companions' raping of the women of a weaker party of Indians, caused him a genuine personal unhappiness; and his misery over the butchery at the Bloody Falls haunted him the rest of his life. How different from Hearne were the toughs of

The guns which Hearne refrained from using against de la Perouse now stand again facing out to sea through the embrasures of Prince of Wales's Fort. —Ted Clymer.

Ruined walls of Hearne's dwelling at the great stone fort are objects of annual interest to passengers from the "Nascopie."
G. Hunter for N.F.B.

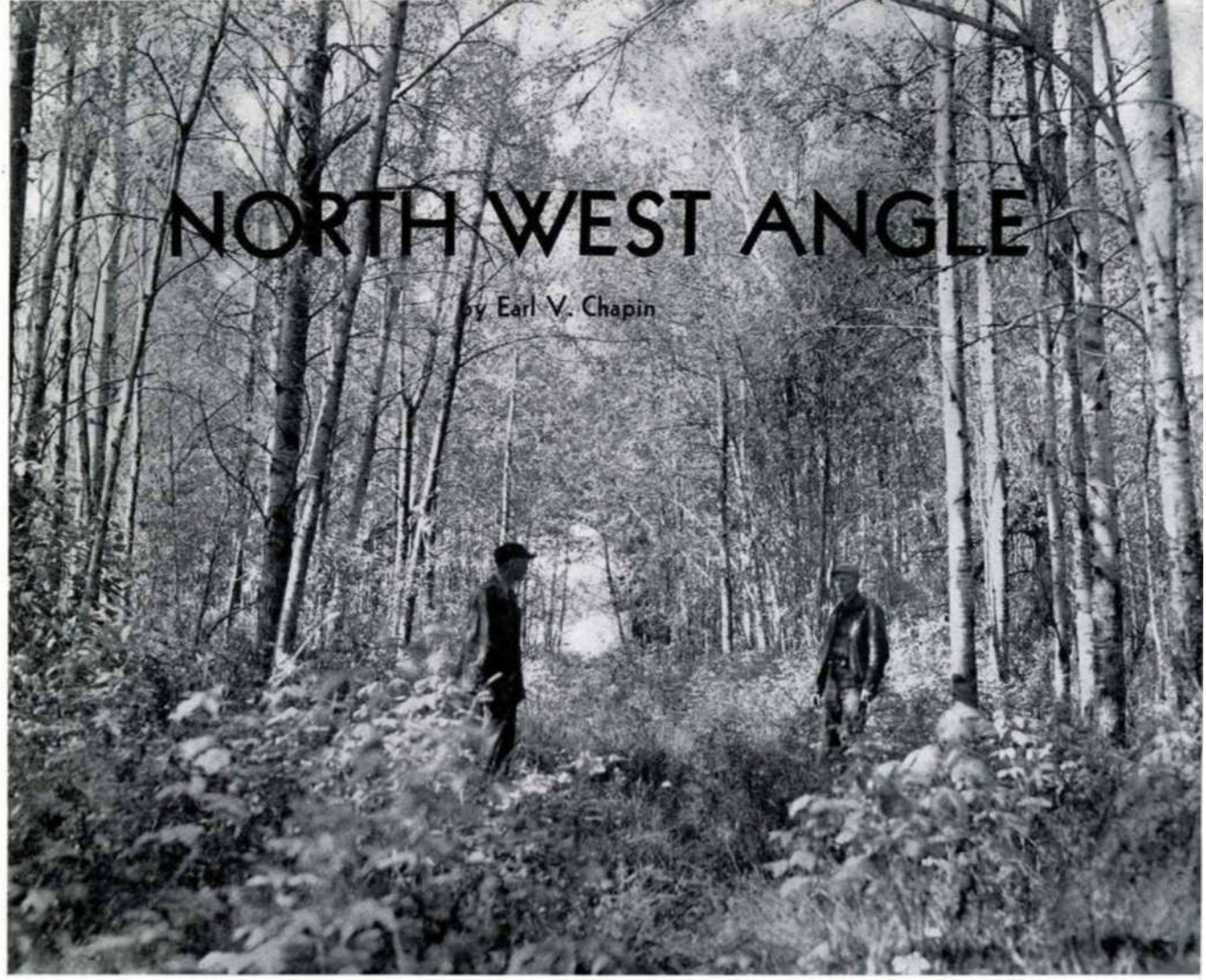
the North West Company! Cruelty and violence never troubled them; "Le Boeuf stabbed his young wife in the arm, Little Shell almost beat his old mother's brains out with a club . . . I sowed garden seed," records Alexander Henry the younger in his casual way.

As a reporter, Hearne relied on personal observation, not hearsay, and was painstakingly accurate. One of his most interesting chapters is that describing the animal life of Hudson Bay from which we have already quoted. It was edited for the Champlain Society by the distinguished American biologist, E. A. Preble. With all the advantage of a century and a quarter's accumulated knowledge, Preble only caught Hearne in one mistake. That is where Hearne says the flicker did not migrate but wintered in the woods about the Bay; and it is a very easy mistake to make. In a part of Ontario where I used to live, the bluebird and the robin are, as elsewhere, migrants, but I recorded odd belated individuals in winter months, and without the information of books and other ornithologists I could easily have supposed them normal, if uncommon, winter residents. A similar exceptional instance could explain Hearne's mistake about the flicker. Hearne's proven accuracy makes his account valuable, as he still has some things to tell that are not to be learnt elsewhere. For instance, his remarks on the snow bunting: "They live long in confinement, have naturally a pleasing note, and when in company with canary birds soon imitate their song. I have kept many of them in cages with canary birds and have always found they sung in winter as well as in summer." The ability of one bird to imitate another's song, and add it to its own, is an uncommon one which ornithologists have noted with interest in such species as the starling and the mocking bird; I am not aware that anyone but Hearne has noticed it in the snow bunting. The winter song is also an interesting point. Again, Hearne's record of the passenger pigeon at Churchill is something we should not otherwise have known.

Hearne lived but five years after leaving the Company in 1787. We gather that he died poor, not because he was personally unthrifty but because his generosity made him too easy a mark for unscrupulous borrowers. His portrait shows a handsome and intelligent face, and he seems to have been something of an athlete, as he was "celebrated for being particularly fleet of foot on snowshoes." He is a unique figure; there have been many great travellers and many fine writers, but Hearne has excelled the greatest travellers in travelling and ranks as high among Canadian authors as among travellers. It is a tragedy that no cheap edition of his great book is on the market.

NORTH WEST ANGLE

by Earl V. Chapin

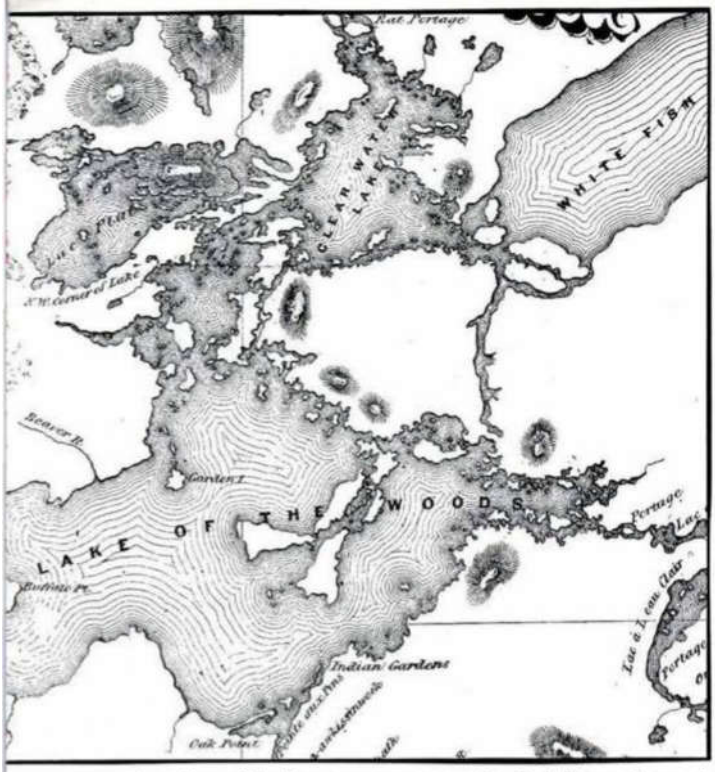


Looking along the boundary line that runs south between Manitoba and Minnesota to the 49th parallel. E. V. Chapin

AT the northern extremity of that northernmost point of the United States, the Northwest Angle, there is a spot, all but forgotten now, that has a curious and fascinating history. Here a wide creek empties into the still, bog-coloured waters of Angle Inlet, forming the base of a triangle completed by the shore of the Lake of the Woods to the northeast and the boundary between Manitoba and Minnesota to the west. This is a triangle of American soil. But upon it, some seventy-five years ago, stood a Canadian village. Small though it was, in its heyday it stood strategically athwart the greatest artery of traffic into the expanding Canadian west, and had not railways spelled the end of an elaborate plan for inland water transportation, this settlement might have become one of Manitoba's most important cities. Its name was Nor'west Angle.

Nor'west Angle was born of widespread political unrest that for many years eddied about the Red River Colony. This colony was an anomaly, a vanguard so far ahead of the slow tide of settlement, that its very misalignment with the development of the Dominion created a serious political problem. Bitter winters and the opposition of rival fur interests took a heavy toll of the Earl of Selkirk's original project, but owing to the fertility of the valley soil and the infusion of the rugged Metis, the Red River settlement grew and prospered. Isolated from eastern Canada by thousands of miles of nearly trackless wilderness, the Red River colony came to look south to the United States for its needs and commerce. Oxcart brigades connected the settlement with St. Paul and the railways of the continent. Mail came by that circuitous route; American newspapers and opinions were read. At length Canadian leaders began to fear, or professed to fear, that the Red River Colony might be annexed by the United States unless an all-Canadian route, linking it with the cities of the east, was provided. Out of this concern developed the Dawson Route, which ran from Fort William on Lake Superior to Fort Garry. From Lake Superior to the Northwest Angle this was primarily a water route. At the Angle the water-borne freight, mail and passengers were loaded into carts and stage for the last lap over the Dawson Road to Ste. Anne des Chenes. And it was at this focal transfer point, at the mouth of Harrison Creek, that the town of Nor'west Angle grew up.

The first use of the Dawson Road was made in 1870 by a company of the Wolseley Expedition which was dispatched by the Canadian government to ensure a peaceful transfer of Rupert's Land. The road was not yet completed, but a company of the 60th was sent that way and "by dint of much energy and determination succeeded in getting through the swamps."



A section of the large map accompanying S. J. Dawson's report of 1858. Note Rat Portage, now Kenora, at top of map.

Much construction was done in the ensuing year, and a second expedition made use of the road in the late fall of 1871. The diary of a private soldier of that expedition provides us with the first glimpse of Nor'-west Angle, then scarcely more than a construction camp. After marching all day through half-frozen marshes, breaking through ice up to their ankles, the hearts of the soldiers were lightened by the sight of the "shanties of the Nor'west Angle." Here they packed their accoutrements in Red River carts "made without iron in any form, not even a nail, each drawn by one ox, harnessed with rudely made harness of untanned cow hides." To the tired soldier who kept the diary, the road seemed "fine, smooth and level."

One of the solid silver medals given to the chiefs who signed Treaty No. 3 at Northwest Angle, October 3, 1873. From the H B C Historical Collection

By 1874 the Canadian government had spent more than a million and a quarter dollars on the Dawson Route, and supplies and immigrants were streaming over it into the Red River Valley. More than 300 people came to Manitoba by this route in 1874. A stage line from Winnipeg to Nor'west Angle was established in 1875. It made trips thrice weekly, and with this improved service 2700 people patronized the route in that year, 800 of whom were immigrants.

Nor'west Angle was a busy town in those days, and it was congested. Part of the congestion appears to have been due to bad management by the company which operated the transportation facilities of the Dawson Route. The *Winnipeg Daily Free Press* dated July 10, 1874, reports that on July 3rd of that year there was assembled at Nor'west Angle "fully 300 passengers," 200 of whom had come in one group on the steamer *Lady of the Lake*. An arduous journey was climaxed here by a shortage of food. At an open air indignation meeting, travellers drew up three foolscap pages of grievances to be forwarded to the Prime Minister of the Dominion government. The memorial quoted the company as advertising: "comfortable conveyance both by land and water," whereas the travellers found the employees—to mention a few complaints—"profane, impudent, obscene and lazy and the boats leaky."

Tradition says that at the height of its brief and uncertain glory, Nor'west Angle had a population of around 500 people, including personnel associated with traffic along the Dawson Road, Hudson's Bay Company men engaged in the fur trade, mixed-breeds and Indians. Sometimes the population swelled to several times that number as at the time of the Indian treaty of 1873 when over a thousand of the dusky inhabitants of this region gathered here for a council with the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the N.W.T. A vivid picture of this occasion has been preserved in the diary of another soldier who was a member of the Governor's contingent:

"Arrived Sept. 2. The Governor of Manitoba arrived at 3.30. The Indians mustered in great force with squaws, papooses, etc. They marched around our camp headed by an old fellow in a soldier's coat and a plug hat who looked like a broken down Admiral of the 'Blue' with the jim-jams. Their music consisted of four drums. They sang songs. . . . The master of ceremonies wore a glaring red shirt with no sleeves, a plug hat, and white calico trousers. The clothing of most of the other braves was fancy but slight, consisting chiefly of nothing.

"Sept. 26. The Indians do not seem anxious to get to business. However, I do not blame them, for as long as they can make the affair last, the government is bound to supply them with food, etc. The way they gourmandize is simply alarming. Already two deaths from this cause have been reported. The Indian too, is an inveterate gambler and I have seen one sit down and stake his all, wigwam, squaw and all on one throw or guess. All their gambling games are accompanied by a low droning kind of chant by the spectators, with great beating of drums which increase with vigor as the excitement grows great."

On October 1 the council began:

"The assembled braves during the pow-wow would grunt incessantly, this to denote approbation, and when anything was mentioned about eatables, the grunting was terrible."

Contemporary accounts of Nor'west Angle are scarce however, and fail to give much indication of its size, or description of its nature. In 1877 two women who kept accounts of their travels which were subsequently published, visited the spot. One was Lady Dufferin, wife of the then Governor-General of Canada, who recorded the following in her *Canadian Journal*:

"*Saturday, September 1st.* Ten or twelve miles of rough road brought us to the North-West Angle, where we found a beautifully decorated steamer on the Lake of the Woods.

"There were a few Indians about: one who is always called 'Colonel Wolseley,' because he was a guide to Sir Garnet, on the Red River Expedition. . . . We had to part with Mr. McKay here, and to put ourselves into the hands of twenty-six canoe men. They all came on board at the North-West Angle, which is a morsel of the United States mixed up with our land."

From Lady Dufferin's account one would scarcely suspect that a town existed at this exchange point, but that there was is a fact amply recorded by Mary Fitzgibbons in her book *A Trip to Manitoba* (1877).

"The Nor'west Angle," writes Miss Fitzgibbons, "is a little village at the northwest corner of the Lake of the Woods at the mouth of a nameless river, or narrow arm of the lake. The banks on one side are high and wooded, on the other high also, but comparatively bare of shrubs or trees; while between them the river wanders hither and thither.

"The company's house is a long, low white building, with narrow windows and doors, neat fences and grass plots in front, and a kitchen garden showing signs of care and attention. The houses are one-story log buildings and plastered with mud inside and out. There are also several birch wigwams, full of smoke and swarthy children, the owners squatting at their low doors.

"The Angle was quite lively that afternoon," concludes Miss Fitzgibbons in describing the community. There were "fifty or sixty navvies searching for work," and Indians were coming in to trade. She records that the Hudson's Bay Company provided early lettuce for the party, and that the half-way house was full.

"The big steamer *Lady of the Lake*, being as usual stuck on a rock about forty miles out, we were towed behind a barge by a shaky-looking little tug."

In the summer, clover grows in profusion on the level creek-side where once the town of Nor'west Angle stood. It grows so heavily that it almost conceals nearly a dozen excavations of buildings that must have comprised the heart of the settlement.

"Northwest Angle should become a place of considerable resort," S. J. Dawson had once written, "and therefore a town plot should be laid off, and the lots sold or granted free under condition of building a permanent residence."

Not far away the ruts of the Dawson Road, still discernible, make their way along Harrison Creek, the road grade becoming more and more clearly defined as the trail passes from field to forest.

As indicated by the excavations, the town of Nor'-west Angle was squarely and unmistakably founded on American soil. It couldn't have fulfilled its function otherwise, as Harrison Creek at the outlet flows momentarily through the Northwest Angle. The long dispute concerning the location of the "northwesternmost point of the Lake of the Woods" had finally been settled in 1872, so authorities here must certainly have known they stood on foreign ground. The matter, however, was a small technicality growing out of the vast absurdity of the Northwest Angle itself.

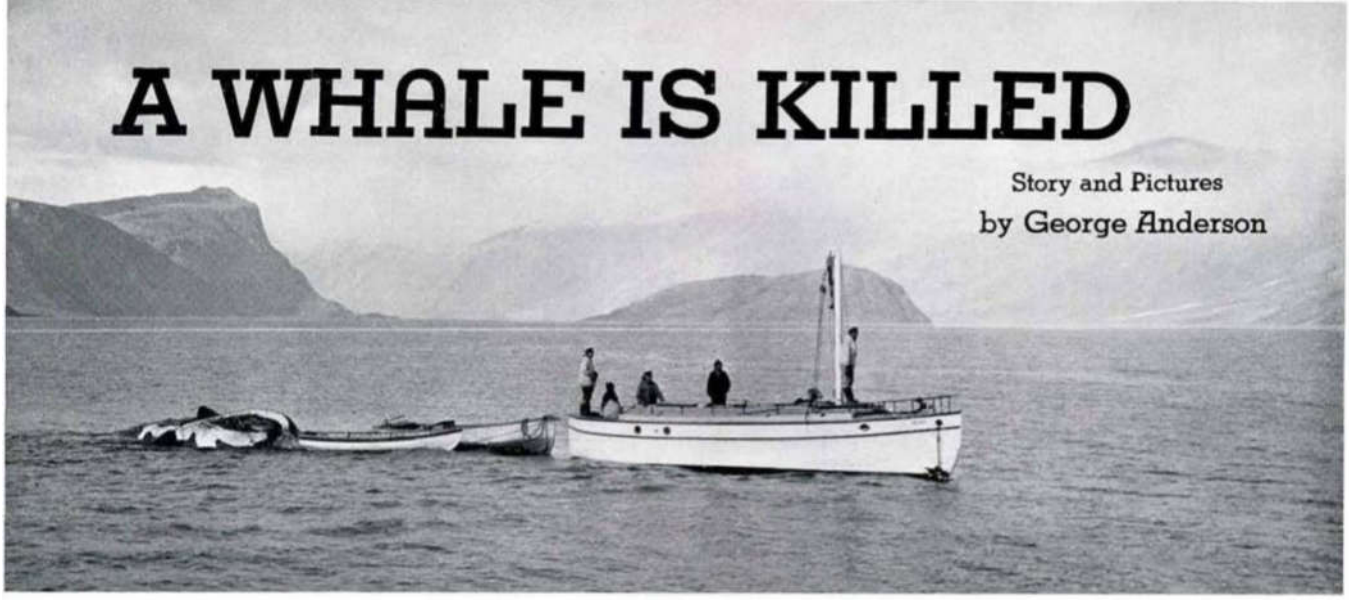
The Dawson Route, and particularly its further possibilities with the canalization of the waters between Lake Superior and the Lake of the Woods, was a subject of great interest and also heated dispute in Canadian politics for some time. But the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway to Rat Portage (now Kenora, Ont.) in 1881, spelled the doom of the route. Nor'west Angle, which might have become an important junction on a great mid-continent transportation route, declined so rapidly that within fifty years it had passed out of the memory of men and the story of it remained only in the pages of contemporary print.

Nor'west Angle was born of political unrest. The days of its brief existence were filled with unrest. With renewed interest in the economy of water transportation and hopes revived for the St. Lawrence project, the ghosts of Nor'west Angle are restive still. It is interesting to note that in approving power developments on the Rainy River at International Falls, the United States government reserved the right to construct a canal on the American side of the river, if that becomes desirable at some future date.

Where the settlement of Northwest Angle formerly stood. E. V. Chapin

A WHALE IS KILLED

Story and Pictures
by George Anderson



The H B C motor boat "Ungava" in Pangnirtung fiord, returning from Kingwa with the dead whale in tow.

AT five-thirty on a July morning last year, I was awakened by shouting outside my window. I went to the door, and was met by one of our Eskimos, Angmallik. Obviously trying to hide his elation, he announced that he and his friends had killed a Greenland whale—the first to be taken in Cumberland Sound for many a long year.

The great news was spreading fast all through our settlement of Pangnirtung, "the metropolis of the Eastern Arctic," and the excitement and jubilation were mounting. The whale had been killed in Kingwa fiord, over fifty miles away, where two crews of natives had been sent to hunt these monsters, once so plentiful in the sound, but now so rare.

We couldn't start for Kingwa until mid-afternoon, on account of the tides, so Angmallik had plenty of time to relate his story to all comers. He and his companions had been camped on the shore at Kingwa, when the whale appeared. They had watched him swimming lazily around for a while, and then he had gone to sleep on the surface, close to the camp.

Angmallik and his friends didn't permit him to prolong his beauty sleep. This was a gift from the gods—a "sitting duck" on a colossal scale! Out went the boats. Both of them were captained by Eskimos who had seen service with the whaling ships when Cumberland Sound was the scene of international whaling activities—Kenainak, and Angmallik himself. Each boat was equipped with an old harpoon gun—a legacy of the whaling days—mounted on a swivel bracket in the bows. One of them bore a legend: "POLYNIA. DUNDEE. 1861. No. 1. Dd Neave. Maker. Dundee." Presumably it was No. 1 gun of the ship *Polynia*, sailing out of Dundee eighty-four years before. Such a gun throws a four-foot steel harpoon to which is fastened a hundred fathoms of one-inch manila line.

Kenainak's boat was also armed with a shoulder gun for shooting explosive darts or bombs. These darts are about a foot long, and have a hollow core into which powder is poured when it is to be used. In the tail is a short length of fuse, which is ignited by the explosion in the barrel when the gun is fired. The idea is to shoot the dart into the vitals of the whale, where it explodes. The dart is stabilized in flight by three resilient rubber vanes, fitted into the tail. These vanes are wrapped round the dart when it is thrust into the gun, and thereby help to build up compression.

Each boat had also a supply of long lances for use at close quarters when making the kill.

As the whale was asleep, Angmallik, who captained the lead boat, practically beached his craft on the monster's back before firing his harpoon. The whale sounded deep—in fact too deep for Angmallik's peace of mind. Out sped the harpoon line: forty; sixty; eighty fathoms. Finally there was no more to pay out. The gunwale at the bow was practically level with the water, and Angmallik was a very worried man indeed. At last, he reluctantly ordered the line severed in order to prevent swamping.

The boats waited for the whale to surface, which it did after being submerged for half an hour. The closer boat, captained by Kenainak, rushed in, let go another harpoon and an explosive dart.

Again the beast dived, but the dart had done its deadly work by exploding deep inside its body, and it was a very sick whale which broke surface a few minutes later.

Kenainak worked his boat in close for the kill . . . long lances darted into the animal seeking a vital spot . . . hot, furious, exciting work, while the monster writhed in its agony.

Ten minutes—fifteen minutes—and the great animal slowly rolled over, dead.

Some of the weapons used in whaling. Letters refer to items in photo opposite. In centre is the harpoon gun (A) with a hinged-barb harpoon in the barrel. Leaning against it is a bomb, also fired from this gun. The Eskimo in the middle holds a bomb-throwing gun (C) and bomb to fit it (D). On left is a fixed-barb harpoon, and held diagonally is a lance head (I).

The whale beached at Kingwa fiord.

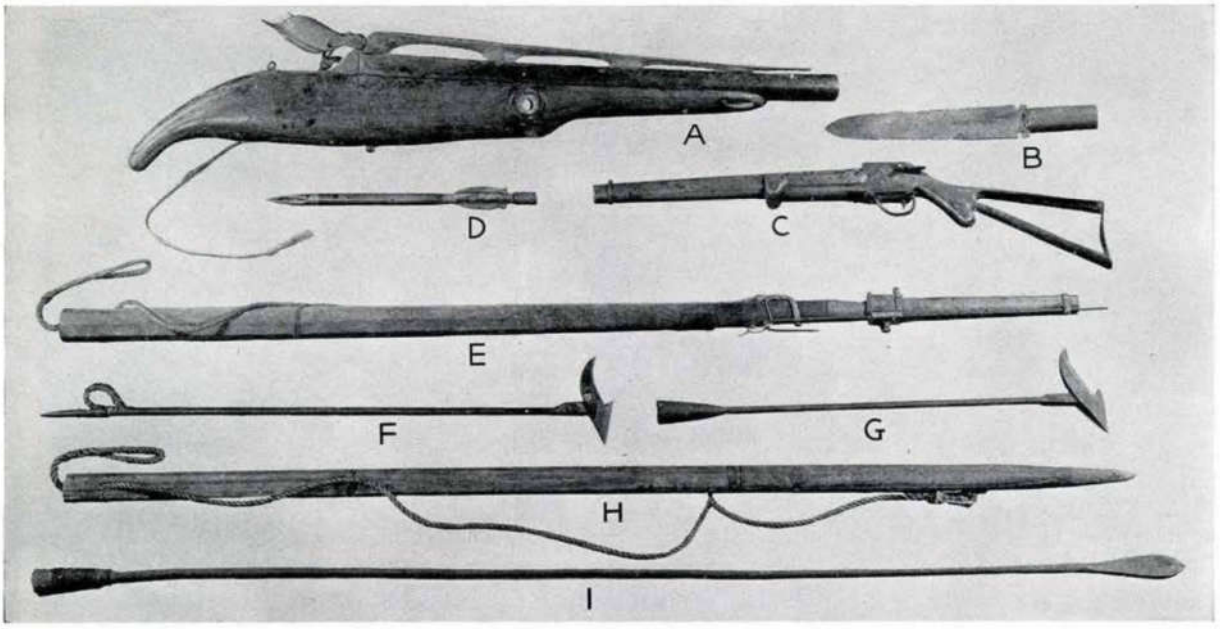
At Pangnirtung, after Angmallik's arrival with the news, virtually all of the white population of the settlement elected to make the trip to Kingwa. It was a gala day. The two Hudson's Bay boats reached Kingwa at 11 p.m. and the others straggled in at intervals from midnight on. The wind was blowing down the fiord on our arrival and we got a whiff of the animal about half an hour before we saw it. (The camp was above the Arctic Circle, so there was twenty-four hours of daylight.) The tide was running out and the whale was high and dry, so we were able to have a good view —which was all right so long as one remained upwind! It proved to be quite a size, even though examination of the baleen showed it to be only half grown. In actual fact it measured thirty-six feet long, twenty-three feet in girth, and the baleen was better than five feet in length. The baleen in a full grown adult reaches a length of ten feet with a body length of from fifty to sixty feet.

When the tide rose we towed the whale into deep water and were all set for the return journey. Six boats in all joined in the towing and considerably helped to shorten the time for the trip back to Pangnirtung, which took us eighteen hours.

Flensing was commenced immediately. Special knives with twenty-four-inch blades and fitted with long handles are used in this process. The blubber was eleven inches thick on the back and ten inches on the belly, so these long knives were necessary.

The first step in flensing is to make parallel incisions about two feet apart from the top of the back and running down the sides towards the underside of the carcass. A hole is then cut on the top end of one of these strips and a line passed through, which is connected to a block and tackle. Next a spade-like implement with a good cutting edge is used. Starting from the top, a man using this tool separates the layer of blubber from the flesh, while others pull the strip off

Whaling weapons in the H B C historical collection. A, harpoon gun stamped "Queen, Peterhead, 1852. No. 17." The percussion hammer is seen under the lifted brass guard. B, flensing knife blade, stamped "Brades Co." C and D, bronze gun and bomb. The gun is marked "E. Pierce, Patent—F. E. Brown, Mfr., 4 South Water St., New Bedford." E, bomb spear. The bomb is held in the brass barrel, and when the spear hits the whale, the protruding wire is pushed back, firing the charge. F and G, swivel-head harpoons. G fits on the end of H. The lance head, I, also fits on H, making a lance 12 feet long.



with the block and tackle. The strip so removed is then cut into convenient sizes for easy handling. This procedure is repeated on both sides until the top is completely stripped. The carcass is then turned over and the process repeated on the under side. Finally, the blubber from the head and the jaws is removed, and the block and tackle has again to be called into use when removing the latter.

While this is going on the first strips of blubber, cut into easily handled blocks, have been hauled up to the rendering mill, where they are further reduced in size by a gang of native women before being fed into the milling machine.

The machine is driven by a stationary engine and is, more or less, simply an overgrown meat grinder fitted with rotating blades driven at high speed. The blubber is fed into the hopper, drops onto the knives, and is reduced to a heavy cloudy oil which is pumped into huge settling tanks. There it remains until it clears, after which it is barrelled for shipment.

Because of a variety of circumstances over which we had no control, our efforts were curtailed, so are not to be compared with the large scale operations of the great whaling fleets which were wont to hunt these waters up until the time of the First World War. Scotch, Yankee and Scandinavian ships pursued the whales intensively and relentlessly for some one hundred and fifty years in this area with the result that the animals came close to extinction. The industry ceased for the simple reason that it was no longer profitable, what with lower prices for oil coupled with the diminishing supply, and with the invention of a substitute for whalebone (baleen) in 1905. To the best of the writer's knowledge the last whaling ship in Cumberland Sound was in 1918. That ship was of Scottish registry and was under the command of a Captain Taylor.

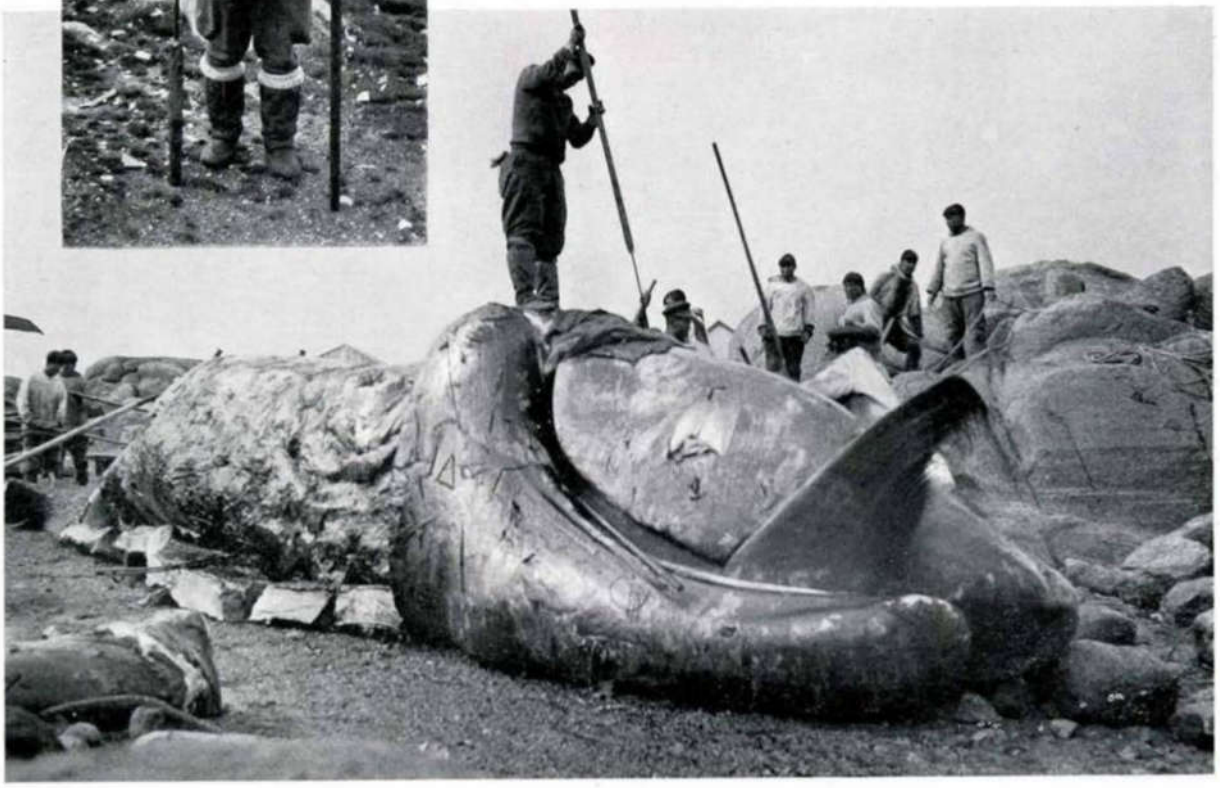
Kekerton and Blacklead Islands were the main whaling bases in Cumberland Sound. These were operated by Scottish whalers, latterly under the control of Mr. Crawford Noble of Aberdeen. These men wintered in the country and the camps were well equipped. Specialized tradesmen, such as blacksmiths, coopers and carpenters, were included in the staff at these stations, and one can see the remains of their workshops on Kekerton Island to this day. The site of the cooper's shop especially is easily recognizable from the hundreds of rusty barrel hoops lying in a pile beside it.

Virtually all the Eskimos in Cumberland Sound were employed in the industry. It is reported that some one hundred and fifty natives were attached to Kekerton, and a like number to Blacklead Island. These figures include men, women and children.

It was the custom for picked crews of natives to hunt whales in boats supplied by the whites. The reward for a successful kill was the gift of the boat to

Left: An Eskimo holds a flensing knife with a 24-in. blade, and the spade-like tool described in the story.

Starting to flense the whale's head at Pangnirtung. Note the syllabics carved on the monster's lower jaw. The triangular mass sticking up from the lower jaw is the whalebone, or baleen.



Whale oil being pumped into settling tanks.

The author standing behind the entrance of a Karmuminirk house ruin. The white things are whale bones.

the crew—usually a family affair. A few of these old boats are still in use. They are at least forty years old and are extremely dilapidated now, but they must have been of stout construction to last as long as this.

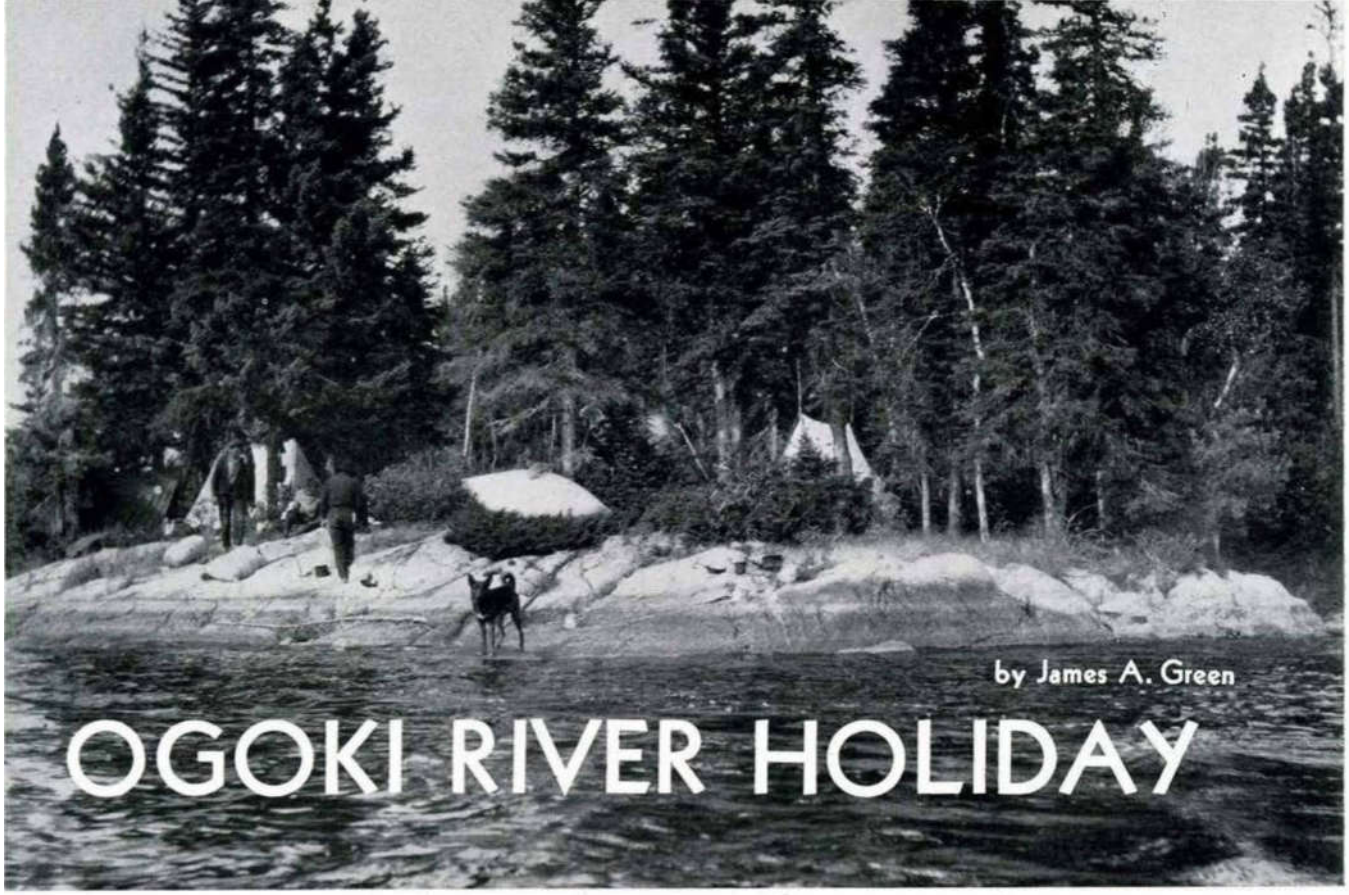
Besides operating the whaling industry, these whalers traded with the Eskimos for sealskins, but apparently paid little attention to finer furs. As a result of this, the natives have a strongly entrenched whaling and sealing tradition, and are only slowly turning towards trapping as a source of revenue.

The impact on the natives' lives has been very considerable in other ways. It is doubtful if there is a racially pure Eskimo in the area. The language, too, has undergone considerable change with the adoption of foreign words, most of which are difficult to recognize because they have been altered to suit the Eskimo tongue.

Whaling, however, was by no means inaugurated in these waters by the white man. From the remains of prehistoric Eskimo houses close to the shores of Cumberland Sound, it is apparent that the culture of these forgotten people was largely based on hunting the giant sea mammals. Innumerable bones of whales are visible among the ruins of their dwellings, which were built of stone and earth. It seems likely that the ribs and jawbones of the right whale were used for beams and posts by these folk, for this region is destitute of any kind of wood.

Without steel or iron, but armed only with harpoons and spears of ivory and bone and stone, the killing of a whale in those days must have been dangerous work indeed, and we cannot but admire the courage of those primitive men, who sallied forth in their frail skin boats to challenge these formidable monsters.

A whaling station on Blacklead Island.



by James A. Green

OGOKI RIVER HOLIDAY

One of the delightful island campsites enjoyed by the Greens on their Ogoki trip.

THE Ogoki River is either the worst of all the northern rivers for canoeing or else the sportiest. It offers everything—rapids, waterfalls, and portages. I first saw it on my way back from Fort Hope to Ombabika. On that route we had about five miles on the Ogoki before we left it to pick up the Kapitongua. There it was serene and beautiful, broad and quiet—so attractive. There I said to myself I must see more of it.

So it was in the summer of 1923 we were once more at Ombabika on the Canadian National Railways main line. It consisted of a water-tower, and adjoining it the house of the Finn who took care of it. That was all there was to it. However, there was a bridge under which bubbled the Ombabika River—a more or less sleepy stream running southward from Summit Lake,

Lonsdale Green of Chicago and his guide Bill Smoke.

which sits astride the watershed and has two outlets, one going southward and finally finding Lake Superior, the other flowing northward and eastward and at last reaching Hudson Bay. Thus it divides its water with equal hand over two watersheds.

There were six in our party: my brother, Lonsdale Green, of Chicago, and his guide, Bill Smoke; my son, Joseph, of the State Department, Washington, D.C., and his guide, Wheatung Shamus; and myself and my guide, Alfred McCue. There was nothing particularly exciting in going up the Ombabika, but Summit Lake is an extraordinary body of water. The Ombabika finally ceased being a river. The first thing we knew we were in an immense swamp, extending as far as the eye could reach. It was densely covered with wild rice and blue papyrus. Through it ran a narrow channel, just wide enough for a canoe. If it had not been for this channel it would have been impossible for us to get through the aquatic growth. The water was clear and there was a display of water weeds of all kinds which I have seldom seen equalled. The place was full of turtles, clams, and minnows. When we stuck the paddle down it went through bottomless soft mud. Emerging from this swamp channel, we came to the lake, which is five or six miles north and south and probably very much wider east and west. At least it appeared to be so. It was shallow, the water under the July sun was tepid, the shores were exceedingly low, and in one or two places were islands which were simply granite hummocks covered with moss and a few small trees.

Between Ombabika and the Ogoki we made six camps. We could have made much better time, but were held up by rain and wind. Also there were one or two bad portages. When we reached the Ogoki, alas,

all the beauty that I remembered was destroyed. There had been the previous autumn a great forest fire, and on both sides of the river for fifteen or twenty miles was a forest of blackened spruce trunks—not one green thing was visible. In many places even the soil had been burnt and the bare ribs of the earth were exposed. However, there was one redeeming feature, for as we entered the Ogoki we met four Indians coming from Fort Hope. They had big freight canoes and were taking supplies back to Fort Hope. These Indians had nearly a whole moose, and we purchased a good supply of meat. We did not know it at the time, but these Indians were to be the last human beings we would see until we reached the Albany River fifteen days later.

On the first day on the Ogoki, as we ran out of the burnt growth, we came to a magnificent waterfall twenty-five feet high. It was a miniature Niagara. The fall was separated by an island into two separate cataracts. The fishing was wonderful—big doré and trout. Beyond the waterfall we had our introduction to the real Ogoki. There was only one short portage. The river was almost continually white water; it had a tremendous current and it was magnificent going. We saw five moose, but we were not hunting moose, and anyhow there was nothing to do but to keep in the navigable channel and continue going. It would, I take it, be quite impossible to try to go up stream in that part of the river; it would mean steady portages. But going down stream was a joy.

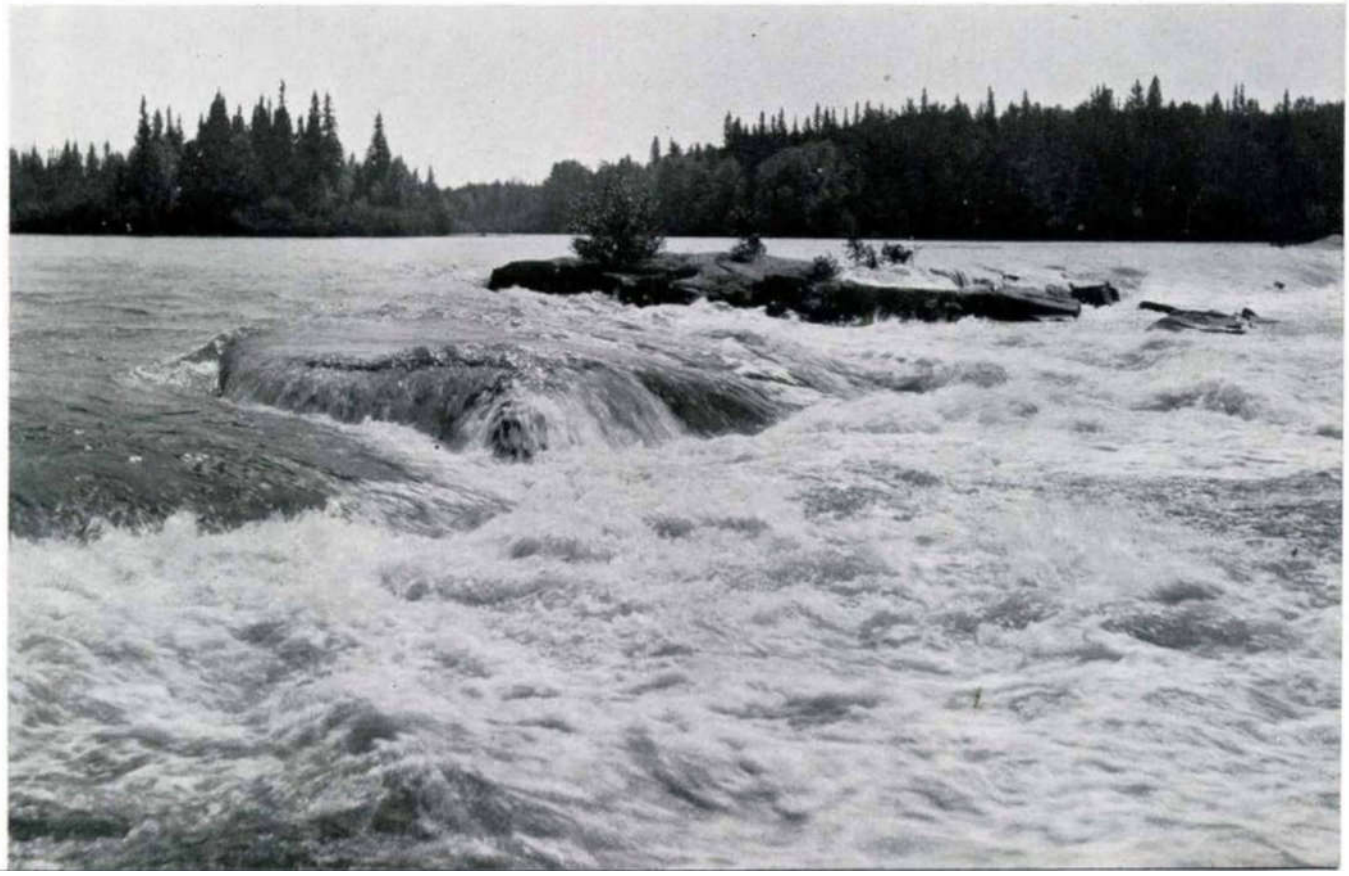
So we came to Lake Ogoki, twelve miles from east to west and about twenty miles north and south—a beautiful and extensive lake.

Coming into the lake in the late afternoon, there was no wind to disturb us and we paddled across it and made camp two miles from the eastern shore. That camp had everything—a perfectly delightful spot—large, smooth place for the tents, a fine beach for swimming, blueberries for the picking, and good fishing anywhere about it. My son Joseph was so happy and exuberant about it that after dinner he and the Indians gathered an immense amount of drift wood and built a fire on the beach. If anyone had been within seeing distance, they too could have enjoyed that fire. It was one place where a bonfire could be built with impunity. It was built far out on the sand, there was no wind, and there were no trees near. I always think when one has an ideal camp, such as this, it is a pity it cannot be taken along. I might say that two years later I visited Lake Ogoki with my friend, Dr. Nevin M. Fenneman, head of the geology department of the University of Cincinnati, and we made an accurate survey of the lake, drawing the map to scale. When I revisited this island on that occasion, the sandbar was gone, for the level of the lake had risen at least three feet. It was surprising, but nevertheless true.

Two days later when we left the lake there was a furious storm, a terrific wind from the west. After we had started and got out in the open, it was impossible to turn back. The previous day my brother and his guide had explored the outlet. So we knew where to go. My brother and my son paddled for the outlet and made it safely. Whether Alfred and I were not as good paddlers, or whether we were not sure of our course, I do not know. At all events, while the others made the channel to the mouth of the river, we paddled straight across and found shelter a mile away from it. It was not possible for us to round the point to the bay, so we crossed it. Then we made a rough portage to the river, the others coming to our assistance. However, we lost practically the entire morning. Then when we started down the river—it began with a long rapid—we followed the south shore and found that we were in another lake, so to speak, or at least an immense bay. My brother kept a diary, from which I quote:

"We found ourselves in an unknown and uncharted lake. We monkeyed around there all afternoon

White water on the broad Ogoki about forty miles from its junction with the Albany.



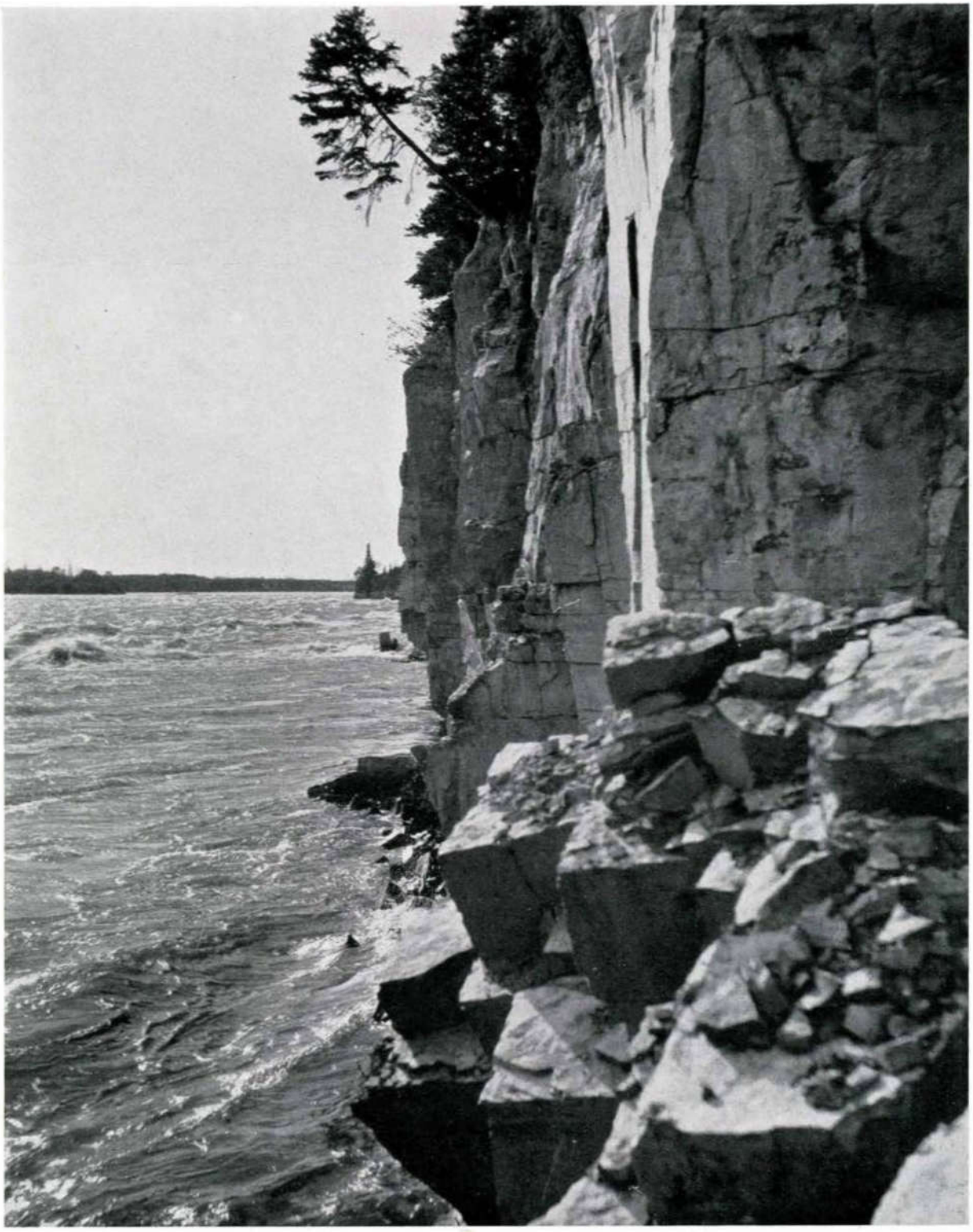
Above: Members of the party reach the end of a portage around some impassable falls.

Below: The author, James A. Green of Cincinnati puts the finishing touches on a fish chowder.

looking for a way out. We found an inlet of a tributary stream. So, following the shore, we camped about a mile or so from the real Ogoki."

Of course, one cannot really be lost on a river—all you have to do to come out is to keep going. We knew that if we did this ultimately we would reach the Albany River. Yet we were lost in that we could not locate ourselves on the map. The Hudson's Bay people the year before had told us the Ogoki below the lake split and flowed in two separate and distinct channels and that the North Branch was so bad no one even attempted to navigate it. So we followed the south shore in an effort to avoid the tumultuous north branch. If the river really did divide, we never saw the forks; nor did we even see the place where it came together. However, we soon found that the government map had been made from imagination. We knew that by going downstream we would be quite all right. We made nine camps before we reached the Albany and did not know where we were until we came to the place where the Whitefish River falls into the Ogoki—falls into it is literally correct. It plunges into the Ogoki like another young Niagara, and with such a rush as to send its boiling water clear across the Ogoki with a roar we heard two miles away. It was a grand sight.

Furthermore, in that wild and riotous water there were trout so hungry they jumped at the fly. Trout cannot find cold water in August so they get the effect of cold water by going to the places where the water is in rapid movement. The Ogoki is seldom fished—or at least had not been fished by white men when we were on it. Needless to say, it was a fisherman's paradise. I often wondered what old Izaak Walton, who went to such vast effort in those little English streams



Picturesque rocks on the Ogoki three days paddle east of Lake Ogoki. The canoes had to be lifted vertically up this rocky wall to make a portage around a waterfall. All photos in this article were taken by Mr. Green.

Lunch beside the river to the east of Lake Ogoki.

to get a few poor fish—I wondered what he would have done on such a stream as the Ogoki. As I remembered, Izaak carried his fish in a creel. The fish on the Ogoki were too big to go in a creel; rather a bushel basket would have been needed. I wish to record, however, that we did not fish for the sake of the fishing. We fished to supply our table, and when we caught enough we stopped. On the river I suppose we saw not less than thirty moose and we did them no harm. The moose affords the Indian his main food supply and I do not think a white man has any business killing one —too much like taking the bread and butter belonging to some one else.

Of course, we had an apparently endless succession of rapids and portages. When a rapid looked as though we would get through it alive, we shot it. When we could see that it was half a cataract, we portaged. I do not mean that we recklessly took chances; that is, we took no chances we could see. But there is a joy in white water and a thrill in being carried along swiftly which no words can describe. And there was never a day which was not filled with thrills.

Our camping places invariably were lovely—always close to the water, always plenty of spruce for bedding and of course, firewood everywhere.

We made such slow progress that we ran out of food and the last four days were reduced to coffee and fish. The Indians didn't seem to mind, but we found that a steady diet of fish was not sustaining for white men. Our last day on the river was trying, partly because we were hungry, partly because it rained steadily and the temperature was 42°, and partly because we were so uncertain as to when we would reach the Albany. The last half hour on the river it suddenly widened and became quiet. On the northwest was a very high bank, and suddenly we saw smoke rising over the bank; then we swung around the point and there was the Hudson's Bay Ogoki post.

As civilization goes, it was not much—a cluster of log cabins; but it was as welcome to us as New York or London would have been. Samuel Iserhoff was the manager, a man of magnificent stature and of kindly heart. He met us at the foot of the bank and said he had received at Christmas time a letter which I had written in October previously, but there had been no way of sending word back to me. The first question he asked was whether we were all alive and whether we were hungry. Happily, the answer to both questions was "Yes." We were made most heartily welcome. There were seventy or eighty Indians summering at the post. They pulled our canoes out of the water and carried our belongings up into the storeroom. Mr. Iserhoff said that supper would be ready very shortly; that his daughter had started preparing it half an hour before. It seemed that some Indian boys walking along the banks of the Ogoki had seen our canoes and had rushed back to the post with the news that strangers were approaching.

What a meal Miss Iserhoff gave us! There was a dish of stewed moosemeat—enough for forty men. There was a great kettle of baked beans; then there was a most particular delicacy because we had been so long without it—a loaf of bread—a tremendous loaf it was too. There was even butter for the bread—the Blue Nose butter that they put up in tins in Nova Scotia. Of course, there was oceans of boiled tea and finally raisin pie. I often think, when my appetite is weary and jaded here at home, that if I could have

At the Company's Ogoki post in 1923. Note York boat with stern sweep in left hand corner.

that raisin pie set before me it would restore me at once; possibly it is a case of distance lends enchantment to the view—but I do not think so.

There was another delicacy we enjoyed—that was smoked sturgeon. We had given an old Indian woman some trifle—a red bandanna, I believe. In return she brought us a great slab of sturgeon freshly smoked—the Albany is full of sturgeon. It was a beautiful thing to look at—that great piece of white meat—of course, I speak from the view point of a hungry man—and it was as good as it looked. The Indians had a rack back of the post on which they were smoking fish over a slow fire.

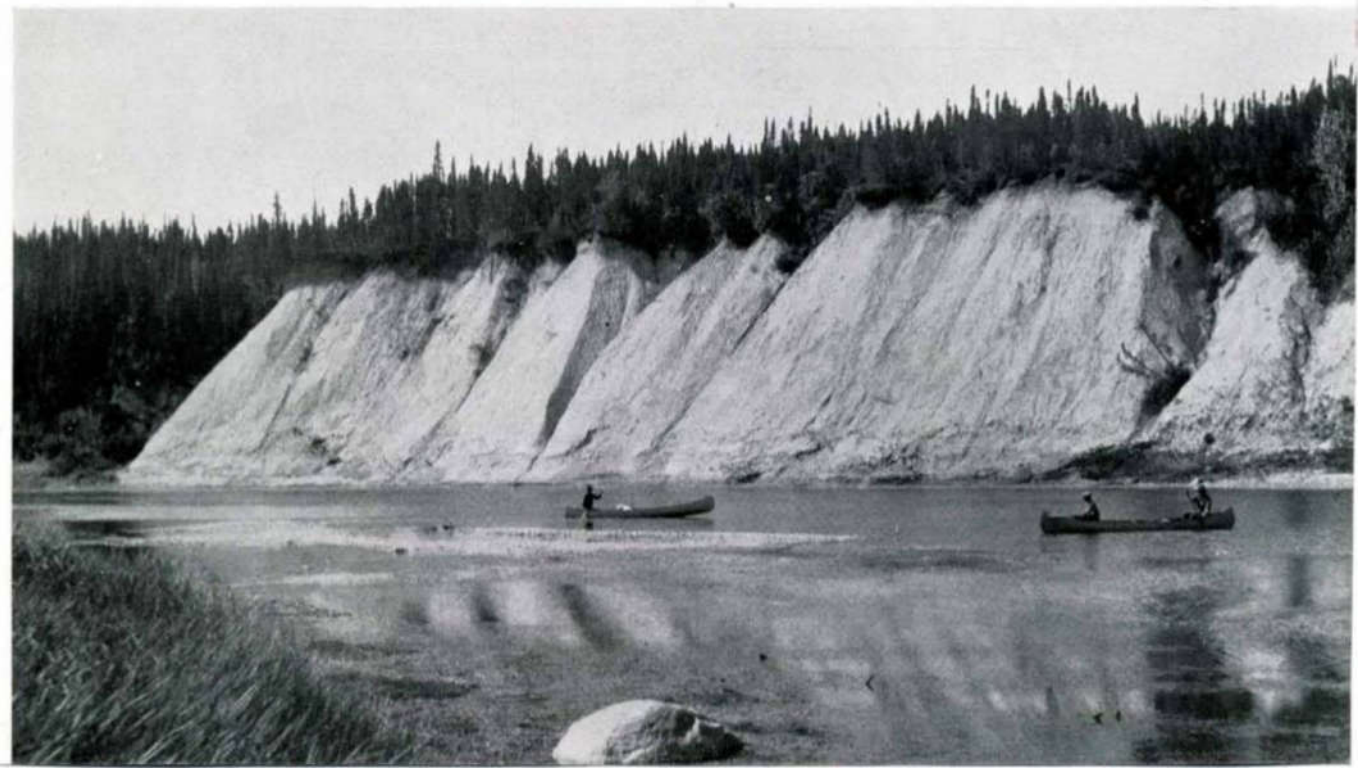
Iserhoff would not hear of our putting up our tents, and we were glad to escape that chore. Instead he bedded us down in the loft of the storehouse. I slept on a pile of those incomparable Hudson's Bay blankets. Of course, we were able to replenish our stores, for the post had flour, beans, sugar, salt pork and lard, which are the foundation stones of wilderness grub. I used to hear canoeists complain of the prices they paid for supplies at the far distant Hudson's Bay Company posts. Very thoughtless of them. To me these posts so remote from cities were miracles of merchandising. The backbreaking work of carrying goods to them from the railroads was enough to add 500 percent to original values.

We rested the next day at the post, and a very bright and beautiful Sunday it was. Like magic, all our toils on the Ogoki were forgotten, long and weary portages seemed to have become pleasant country hikes and the swift and boiling water was an exhilarating memory. At the Ogoki post of the Company I tried telling the Crees about trees which bore fruit and nuts. They could not imagine such a thing, nor could they visualize domestic cattle. One of them asked me where I lived, and when I said that my house in Cincinnati was five miles away from the Ohio River, he wondered how I carried water for cooking. As for electricity and gas—now what is the use? Had I lived in a wigwam all my life and always pitched it as near the shore of the lake or the river as possible, if I had never seen a farm or a city, I could not comprehend the marvels of civilization any more than these Indians.

Our way home was down the Albany River. That is a broad and magnificent stream; its upper reaches are through a granite country, with many rapids and waterfalls. Below the Ogoki it flows between high clay banks—these banks at least seventy-five feet high—lastly, it runs with arrow-like swiftness, and in places it is peppered with great boulders—thousands of them—sticking up out of the water or just under it. Poling the Hudson's Bay York boats upstream certainly must have been an appalling task. But on our first day in the Albany, happily coming down stream, we let ourselves keep going and made forty-five miles.

Altogether, it was a wonderful vacation. I have canoed for many happy summers in the great region which is west of Hudson Bay. But I have never found a fairer stream than the Ogoki. The memory of it still stirs my blood.

Clay cliffs along the Albany.



NORTH WOODS HUNTING TRIP

As told by Ernest L. Brown
To Iris Brown Buaken

A tale of trophy hunting about 1890, gleaned from the diaries of a well known Minnesota taxidermist.

THE big black bear was dead. His body had been dumped in front of a wigwam, in a clearing of the forest. There were half a dozen other wigwams and a few log cabins in this clearing, surrounded by a glistening jungle of tall trees mantled with snow—the winter camp of a group of Chippewa Indians.

Bye and bye I set to work skinning the animal I had killed, but Kaghagh interrupted me to "make medicine." According to his calculations, his son Kaghagh-ens (the Little Raven) had killed the bear, so to make the boy brave like the bear, the Indian took something from under the tongue of the animal—maybe it was a nerve—and gave it to his son to eat.

Kaghagh, the hunter, was my friend, yet he was always crowding me. On the trail through the muskeg, up from the War Road Camp, when we packed in supplies, he took the lead with a steady trot that seemed too fast, considering the loads we carried. For a short time, we followed a hard-packed trail in the snow, but soon were just making tracks, where fallen logs as well as bog holes and icy spots made good skidding.

Maypuck, the chief, and I stopped to look at a deadfall trap he had set a few yards off our route. There was nothing in the trap, but a marten scurried out of the brush and slithered up a tall tree. I craved his hide for my taxidermist business. The Indian threw up his gun and went through the motions of shooting, but nothing happened. Seeing that Maypuck's gun was out of commission, I brought the marten down, and paid him a dollar for the skin to save his face. "Gun like squaw," he said in disgust. "Maybe she will, maybe she won't."

We resumed our dog-trot through the woods, and by night were in the Chippewa village. I bargained for a wigwam banked up with brush, to keep my specimens in. The Indians ate the marten for supper, but remembering how well weasels are supplied with musk glands, my mouth failed to water for it. "I'll take some rice and fish," I told the Indian woman.

Wild rice grows in these marshes, and I had seen the squaws out on the ice when we came into the village, running competition against the otters. They used a line and hook through holes in the ice, or nets to scoop up the pickerel. So I ate very well at the wigwam of my Indian guide.

Gossiping round the camp fire gave the Indians a chance to air their opinions of white hunters. "Indian know how to hunt moose," Kaghagh declared. "Indian not follow trail close like white man. Go away off and crawl up close. Moose smell good, hear good. He walk the way the wind come, walk back on trail, lay down, see white man coming. White man big hurry, Indian take time, get plenty moose."

Next day, impatient to get a moose, I stirred up Kaghagh to go with me. We had also the Raven, Jr., and Maypuck. To carry provisions, a sled, which we took turns hauling, for this was to be a trip of several days' duration. "Heck, let's use the dogs," I complained; but Maypuck explained, as to a fretful child, "Too much snow—too much brush—dogs get stuck all the time."

It was cold, in the north woods, about the last of December. Along the trail we often saw bones of bear or moose, decorated with rags and hung up in the trees. "Moose spirit pleased. Give us success in hunt," so Kaghagh said.

Early in the afternoon, after we left the sled at a landmark spot, it began to snow—not the tempestuous blizzard of the plains country, but a deliberate sifting of an endless supply of feathery whiteness, blotting out all trails of the hunted and the hunter—the armistice of the forest.

So we made camp. We were all warmly dressed in heavy clothing, made either of blankets or fleece-lined leather. I wore boots and several pairs of wool stockings, the Indians had modified moccasins, with leggings of buckskin. And each Indian was equipped with a sleeping bag, made of robes, of strips of rabbit skins tightly braided together. Wrapped in one of these, no weather could touch them. We found dry tamarack logs—that takes woodsman's skill—and soon had a rip-snorting fire, into which the snow fell with a lazy hiss. Then we fed on moose steaks and tea—tea boiling hot to warm a man's insides. What more could we ask of life?

We built a windbreak of interlaced boughs of spruce to the northwest of our fire. I went off to find spruce boughs for my bed. I was not excited by the tale Maypuck was telling—a wild tale of fighting a bear, barehanded, and of licking it. Indian hunters tell tall tales interminably! The boy Kaghagh-ens followed me, boylike, eager on the trail of excitement.

Something prompted me to examine the big upturned root with one side looped over to form a cover. There was a big nest with something black and furry in it! And I had no gun. I motioned to the boy to stand there, and I ran to the fire. Maypuck was still wrestling that mythical bear! Hurrying back to where the boy stood, I shot the sleeping beauty as he stirred drowsily—and the boy hit him on the head with a club. Kaghagh arrived just in time to see his son go into action.

I took the measurements before dark, while the Raven tried to convince me it was his son's bear. My prize weighed about 250 pounds, and had a coat of glossy black. His nest was made of grass and moss, on a foundation of ice.

The excitement of "getting that b'ar" made me forget to fix my bed. And now it was dark and getting colder every minute. Hastily I grabbed a few spruce boughs and spread them on the ground near the fire, then crawled into my sleeping bag with all my clothes on except boots—and only succeeded in getting colder.

The Little Raven crawled out of his warm nest to scrape the ground free of snow at a spot near my bivouac, to spread the fire there. I watched him as he levelled out the embers, meanwhile toasting a piece of

meat for himself. Then he motioned to me to get up: "Put your bed here." Imagine that, the Indian boy got himself out of his warm nest to build one for me! I thought kindly of him, as we spread the spruce boughs I had over the warm ground. But the skunk in the bushes came out soon! "Tomorrow you help me take my bear back to lodge," said Kaghagh-ens, thus proving himself a true descendant of his father. "I killed that bear!"

The matter was still under debate next morning. It was decided to abandon the hunt for moose, in view of the heavy continuing snow. We combined our efforts in getting the bear back to camp, but there was no unity in our thoughts.

At camp, Maypuck led the Indians in ceremonial parties. Equipped with fine head dresses, they were initiating the boy into the status of a full-fledged hunter, on the basis of killing my bear. It gave them an excuse for a dance. I had plenty to do with my collection of specimens—sacks of bones had to be treated and carefully packed—I needed them for reconstructing the bodies of animals in mounting the hides. Each skin had to be treated to preserve it, and careful measurements made, along with notations about the colour, texture of the skin, and other characteristics of the animal.

On a clear cold sunny day I took the trail to get that monster moose I craved for my collection—for the day of the moose in those woods was about over. The one I got would be placed, mounted, in a museum.

The snow was barren of tracks—I crossed the north branch of the Roseau River and saw an otter come up through a hole in the ice. He had a fish in his mouth and was prepared to dine, but changed his mind. He had no intention of sharing with me.

Circling widely, I came to Kaghagh-ens again. He had another proposition! Big hunter Little Raven had found fresh moose tracks—and I had failed. He would show me, if I let him use my rifle. So I followed twelve-year-old Kaghagh-ens. Sure enough, the tracks were fresh, and there had been two moose, joined in a little while by two more. The tracks are much like those made by a cow, only sharper. "Moose hungry too," the boy said. We could see that the bark had been chiselled off saplings of willow and maple. Finally, the Little Raven stopped and made an excited grab at my rifle. Soft-hearted, I let him have it. Ahead of us in the brush was a bull moose—his antlers spread like a big tree above his dark body. Impatiently I motioned to the boy to shoot.

The Little Raven had big ears—he had been listening at the camp fire—so he started a circle around the thicket, Indian hunter style. But the moose didn't know how much better that was. Right then the big fellow left that place. And I had no gun. There was another crash to the left and a cow and two calves started for the north pole. The boy finally steadied his aim—excitement had him shaking—and the cow moose went down under his shots. The calves kept on going, and so did the big bull.

But Kaghagh-ens was happy with his kill. I recovered my gun and kept on alone.

At length I struck an old trail and followed it away northeast through woods and swamp. At noon I made a fire and had some tea, heating the melted snow in the tin cup I always carried, and ate some dried moose meat.

Feeling refreshed, I followed briskly along the old trail. Suddenly I saw in the bushes the straight black leg with the tawny stripe—the brand of the moose. He heard me as I saw him. He lunged and I fired—but not at the part I could see. I aimed where his shoulder ought to be. But he kept on going. I fired again—no luck. Upon examining the thicket, I found blood spattered around, so I had done some damage to the Old Man of the Woods. I followed the bleeding veteran a long way. The snow was deep, but he kept plunging on. It was getting murky, and I had no taste for a night alone in the bitter cold.

Then I saw him—lying still. He hadn't even thrashed around when he fell. He just ran till he fell down dead. Stout fella! I took the pendulous whiskers off his chin as a scalp lock—and hot-footed it, in deep snow for camp.

In the morning I got help to bring in my prize—but I had to give Kaghagh all the meat as a bribe for his assistance. My moose showed that he was a veteran of many wars—I found one big shotgun ball in his skin, near the flank. He had been shot from the rear a long time ago. There was another ball encysted in the skin next to his jaw. This was indeed the monarch of the swamps. His standing height was 78 inches and above his big body his massive horns spread out like immense shields.

I packed up my specimens, but loafed around the village a few more days, watching Kaghagh-ens strut in newly achieved manhood, and listening to the imaginative stories told by this remnant of the once powerful Ojibways.

A cure for bad luck—that was one I remember. This Indian went out on the hunt again and again, only to start the moose without getting him. So at last he rolled up his blanket, took some jerked meat, and started out on a grudge fight. He found a fresh track of moose and followed him. When the moose started, the hunter made no attempt to kill him, but just kept "tailing" him. He camped right on its trail at night. The second day the same procedure. He saw the moose several times during the day. The third day the moose kept but a little way ahead, and finally laid down. The Indian went up to the moose—kicked him, abused him verbally, saying his spirit was weak and "womanish," but the moose would not move. Then the hunter shot the animal, and contemptuously let him lie. After that, this Indian hunter had magic luck with moose, always bringing in plenty of them—he was their master!

The snow in the woods was now too deep for good hunting, so I hired Kaghagh and his friends to pack out my specimens as far as the War Road Camp, and I went back to Warren to "den up" for the winter. When I left Kaghagh and the Little Raven, they were still insisting that the boy had killed the bear.

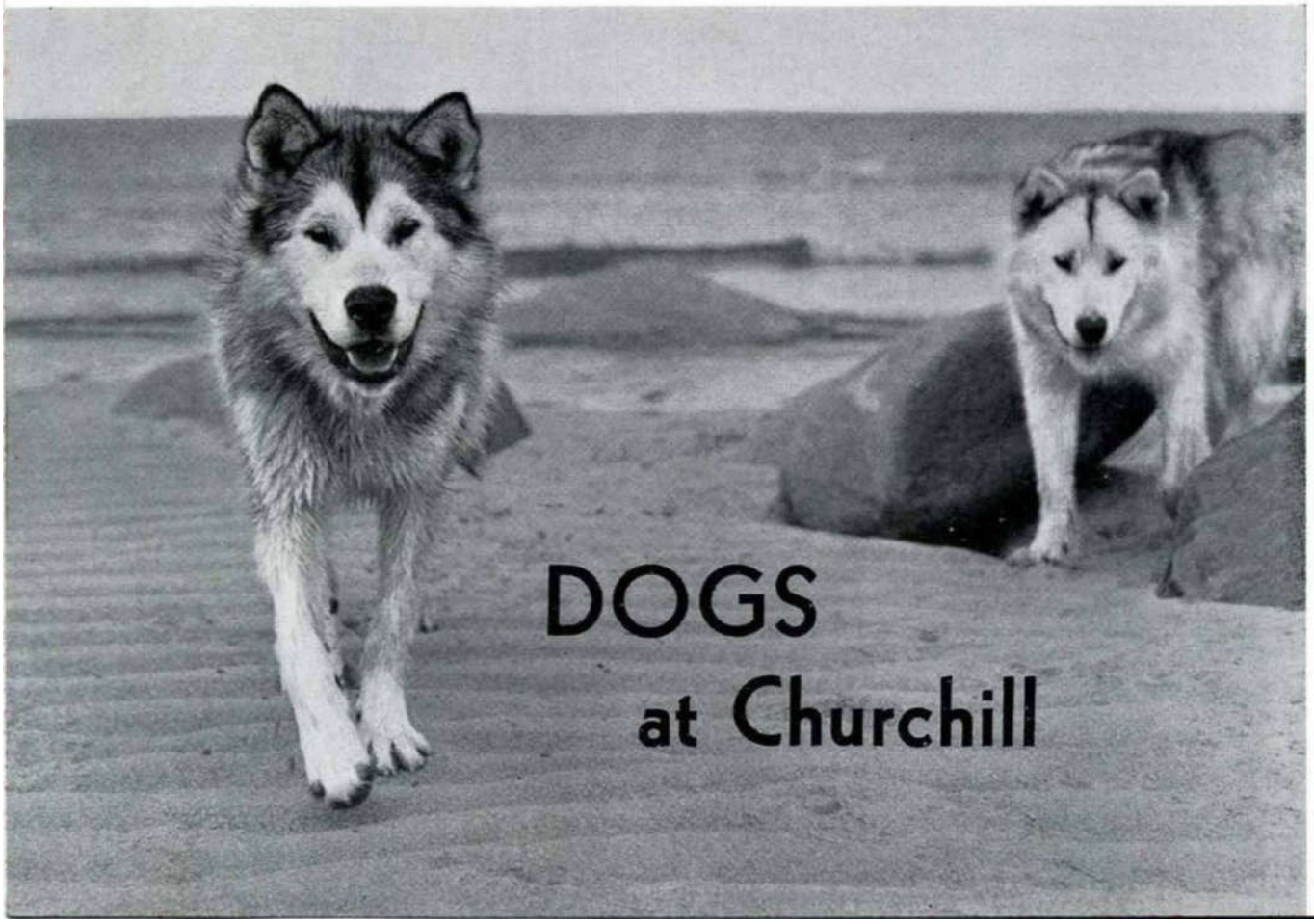
Five happy hunters return to camp with their trophies. Mr. Brown (centre) carries the prize exhibit.

Who's that?

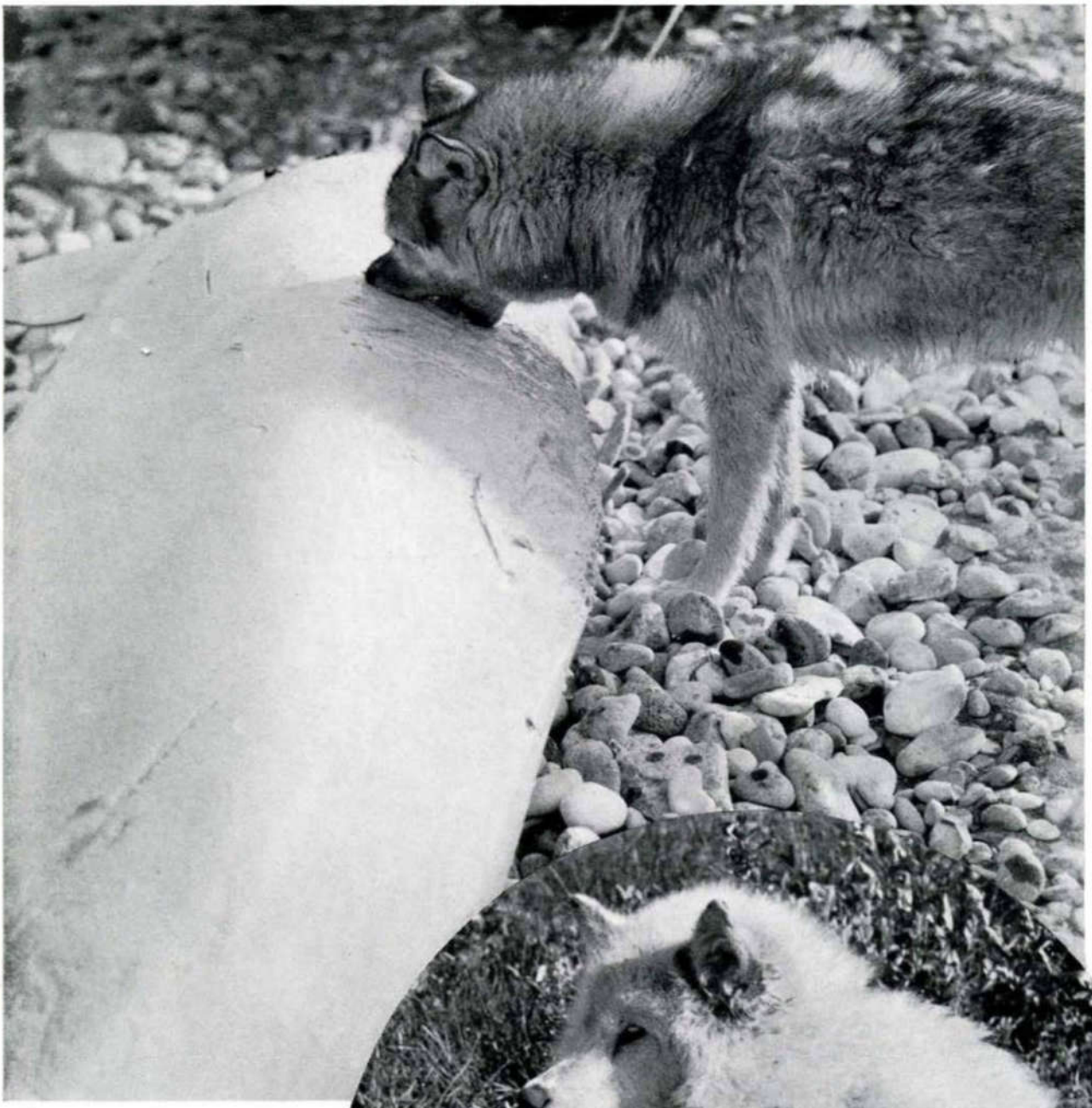
Photo by
Richard
Harrington

All photos
(except one)
by Ted Clymer

A stranger in our midst.



DOGS at Churchill



Piece de resistance.

Summer indolence.

Paterfamilias.

Chow line.

The Nor'Westers Invade the Bay

A hitherto unpublished letter from J. G. McTavish throwing new light on fur trade rivalries of the day.

With an introduction
by W. S. Wallace

AMONG the letters which the late Lady Grierson of Edinburgh inherited from her McTavish ancestors was one written by that famous Nor'-Wester, John George McTavish, in 1803. McTavish was the second son of the chief of the Clan Tavish, and had been introduced into the Canadian fur trade about 1798 as a result of the friendship that had sprung up between his father and the great Simon McTavish, the head of the North West Company. The letter was written by John George McTavish to his elder brother Dugald, who later became sheriff of Argyll; and it has a double interest for the historian of the fur trade.

In the first place, it throws new light on the expedition that Simon McTavish sent up to Hudson Bay in 1803 to found North West Company posts at the bottom of the bay—an expedition about which we have hitherto known very little. All that we have known about this expedition has been derived from two short paragraphs in the introduction to Masson's *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, in which the statement is made that Simon McTavish, in the spring of 1803, sent the *Beaver*, a ship of one hundred and fifty tons, to Hudson Bay to engage in the fur trade under the very cannon of the Hudson's Bay Company's forts; and that two posts were actually established, one on Charlton Island and the other at the mouth of Moose River. From John George McTavish's letter, we learn that the ship which carried the party who founded the post on Charlton Island was the *Eddystone*, that this party was composed of Orkneymen, and that the post they built was named Fort St. Andrews. The letter, of course, gives no indication how long Fort St. Andrews remained in operation; but Masson says that both posts were abandoned shortly afterward. It is probable that the death of Simon McTavish in 1804 sounded the death knell of the enterprise.

The other interesting feature of the letter is the illumination it throws on the break in 1799 between Sir Alexander Mackenzie on the one hand and Simon McTavish and William McGillivray on the other—a break that resulted in Mackenzie leaving the North West Company, and later reorganizing the New North West Company. It has long been known that there had been a violent disagreement between them, but the cause of the disagreement has not been clearly discerned. If John George McTavish's information is correct, it would appear that Mackenzie left the North West Company because Simon McTavish would not give him precedence over William McGillivray as agent for the house of McTavish, Frobisher and Company at Grand Portage, and would not rename the firm McTavish, Frobisher, Mackenzie and Company. Mackenzie apparently thought that in making these demands he had the support of the wintering partners; but in this he was disappointed. "You may remember," wrote Colin Robertson many years later, "the powers Sir A. Mackenzie was possessed of when he made the break with Simon McTavish—but not one of them joined the standard of the Knight."

After taking part in the expedition to Hudson Bay, John George McTavish played a long and famous role in the fur trade. He became a partner in the North West Company in 1813, and in that year he received the surrender of Fort Astoria on the Columbia. In 1821, on the union of the North West Company with the Hudson's Bay Company, he was made a chief factor, and was for many years in charge at York factory. He became a close friend and confidant of Sir George Simpson; and when he died in 1847 he had served for just about half a century in the fur trade.

His letter, written to his brother from Hudson Strait, follows:

At sea off Resolution Islands
4 Augt. 1803

My dear Brother—

From the lateness of the season I find that I shall be too much occupied on my landing in Hudsons Bay (to which I am bound at present) to write pr. the return of the Edystone; Capt. Richards, the ship I am on board of. The Intentions of this expedition is the opposing of the Bay Co. in their Fur Trade, we have about forty men for that purpose who were engaged in Orkney this spring by the captain, it is a bold attempt to go in the faces of the [*illegible*] chartered company from England but serves to shew the enterprising spirit of our Friend and Namesake. How we'll succeed God only knows. It will entirely depend on our reception in the Bay; if they allow us to fix ourselves peaceably we are sure of success, but if they attempt to prevent our landing we will have a little more trouble but are determined to land at all events. You'll no doubt be surprised to hear that we are armed to force our ways but I can assure you that now in this country we are almost obliged to fight for every skin we get from an Indian with the other Traders and last year one of the North West Co's clerks was shot by a clerk of Sir Alexr. Mckenzies Co. in the upper country[1]. This I tell you but expect you'll not talk of it as these matters are kept secret & I would not wish to be known as having communicated them to any of my home Friends. You have heard of this famous Knight who is in opposition to us in the North West but probably never heard his true character, he was raised in the world by one of Mr. McTavishs present partners a Mr. Gregory and was with him in opposition to the N.W. Co. some years ago. He upon a junction being formed 'twixt the two Cos. came in as a partner and held two or three shares, and being of an active disposition, they made him also a partner of the House at Montreal. He crossed the Country twice to the pacific Ocean at the expence of the Co. When he came to Montreal he wished his name to be put in the Firm but Mr. McTavish would not hear of it. He afterwards wished to take precedence of Mr. McGillivray an older partner than he in the agency for transacting the upper country Business and was also baulked in that.

(1) I cannot find any account of such an incident, in 1802, in the literature of the fur trade.—W.S.W.

The consequence was he quarrelled with Mr. McT. and left this House altogether. He went home and published his book and upon presenting it to His Majesty got Knighted and now is at Montreal principal partner of a House in opposition to Mr. McT. (viz.) the North West Co.[2] in the Fur Trade.

I am surprised at your late silence. You have not as yet told me whether you're in business for yourself or *not*. I was happy to see by our Mother's letter of your being employed by Largie on serving him Heir to the late Count Lockhart. Let me know how his sister Annabella comes on—how do you think she would answer for your Honble Servt. I have given Flora a full commission to *Trade* a wife for me[3]. You are dangling after an Heiress I'm told but I hope she is a good girl and that you would take her without a farthing, for if you splice yourself to a woman for cash you ought to be excommunicated from the company of all Good Fellows, and sent to the mint to be coined for the rest of your days. I wish you could inform me where our unfortunate Freind J. S. Skinner is. If he came to Montreal he might get a place in the employ of the Co. I'm sure which would always keep him a little independent and most likely he would be in my neighborhood, let him know this, if you please, and I will endeavor to pave the way for him by talking to my Friends. Do you recollect a little fellow by the name of Cameron who was with James in Edinb. an officer in the Lochaber Regt. He is now on board this ship and goes with me in quality of Labourer; he has been a damned low Blackguard and am afraid will be a troublesome subject.

I never hear of Charley Campbell, I wrote him a long letter some time ago but he didn't think it worth his while to answer it. What is my old friend Geo. Bisset about, is he still looking out for Squalls on the top Gallant yard of a man of war, and Frank Cameron is he still at scribbling. We are at present tossing about in a gale of wind which makes it no easy matter to write, but the weather being bad on deck it is an [*illegible*].

We are informed that we are on the point of being at Loggerheads with our old Friends the French again, I hope it will be some advantage to you in the way of Business. Our Campbeltown friends have been in Edinb. I'm told. You no doubt pay them a yearly visit, pray does Capt. Hector receive you on good terms when you are there? My good Uncle William, notwithstanding his wish that I should write him, never condescended to answer one of three Letters which I wrote him. I forgot to advise you in the forepart of this letter in talking of Sir. Alexr. McKenzie to read that Book of his which you'll certainly find in Edin. It will give you a very distinct account of the whole of our upper country business in his time but now the North West Company have extended their trading countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the pacific but I'm afraid *entre nous* that they will resemble the Frog in the Fable who attempting to swell itself to the size of an Ox burst, but this, God forbid.

Do you never hear of James Loch at all or is he gone to the shades, who has got his Family in charge, the other individuals of that Family are quite in the gay world. How does it come that you do not dispose of our Sisters, I suppose they are getting to be Old Maids. There is one thing regarding them which I wish you to understand. I recollect when present at the melancholy scene of reading our poor Fathers will that there was a certain sum would devolve to me in case of any thing happening to our Mother, this if I do not survive the winter, I beg of you to get made over to Margaret and Flora in equal shares. That is all I have yet got in this world therefore remember my dear brother you have nothing to look for from this side of the water in case of my death. This is all the will I ever made or probably ever shall. I do not mean to anticipate anything happening either to our poor Mother or myself but it is best to be prepared as the frenchman says *en tout cas*. All this you will of course keep to yourself. I intend to talk of you to our Friend regarding Business he may have to transact in Edinburgh. How I'll succeed the Lord knows, as he has a number of relations in your line there.

I am very impatient to hear from you and hope you'll be more punctual for the future, write me a long letter upon receipt of this so that it may be sent by the first conveyance from Montreal in the Spring to our place of destination. Mr. McTavish's reason for sending me upon this expedition is that I'm too wild to remain in Montreal he says, all which is very true for God knows I'm not very tame especially on arriving from the Upper Country. It is all the same to me for I'll probably see Scotland the sooner if I live by being in the country than if I was in Montreal. You will see some of the North Westers this winter, I dare say at all events you'll see a Mr. McLeod[4] from Mull whose sister Flora is acquainted with. He is a very good Friend of mine. Do you ever go to see [*illegible*] bodies or do they ever visit Auld Reekie. John I'm told has turned out a drunken Soldier and how does William come on? He's still helping his mother to keep herself snug at the Fireside—he got soon tired of soldiership. You'll be a good deal astonished to see such a *crossed*[5] from me, but paper is getting scarce in my desk and I can't get at the Cargo. In writing to James Skinner of coming to this country tell him that there are certain terms for young men who engage to the Co. vizt. he must agree for 6 or 7 years for the Upper Country and receive nothing but one hundred pounds curry and an Equipt. of clothes yearly, but if he agrees to act in quality of Surgeon he will be allowed something more. I wish he would come if he is not better situated as it's probable he would winter with me. It is not one hundred yearly but the sum at the end of his time, and to be provided in meat and clothes. These are the terms young men are engaged upon who go up as Winterers.

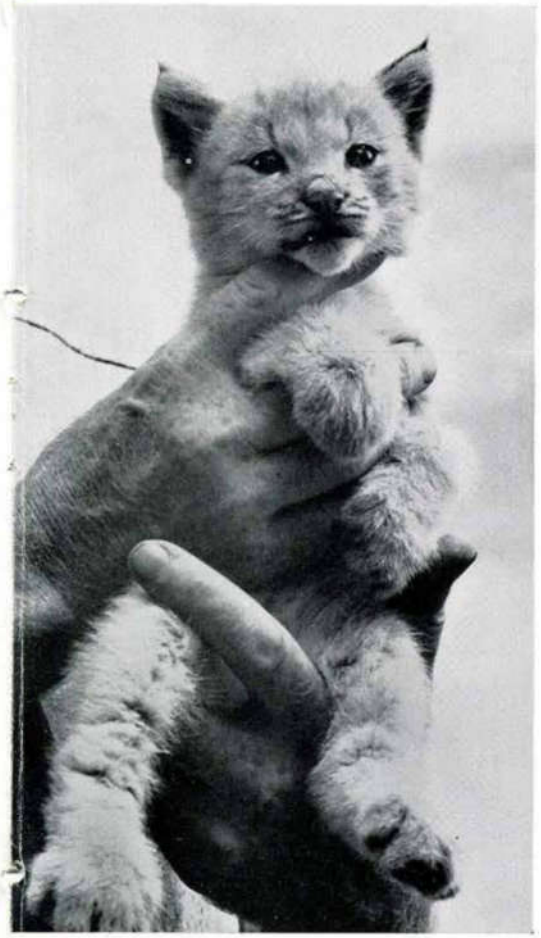
Wishing you health & happiness
I remain Dear Dugald
Your affect. Brother
[*Signed*] J. G. McTavish

P.S. 6th Sept. 1803—

I have just time to inform you of my having landed safely in on Charlton Island James's Bay and that I am now busy building a Fort which is *christened* Fort St. Andrews, the Hudson Bay Co. have not as yet molested us. Give my best love to all Friends.

Mr. Shaw[6] has joined us here and brings us an accot. of War having broke out again.

(2) Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Company was known as the *New* North West Company.
(3) It was not until 1828 that John George McTavish went back to Scotland and married his first white wife, Catherine Turner of Edinburgh. She died in 1841; and he then married Elizabeth (Eppie) Cameron, the niece of Angus Cameron, the chief factor at Timiskaming.
(4) Probably Alexander Roderick McLeod.
(5) A crossed letter—that is, a letter in which a second writing is imposed transversely on a first writing.
(6) Angus Shaw, who had been appointed in 1802 agent in charge of the King's Posts on the St. Lawrence, with headquarters at Quebec.



This cute little number is an offspring of the ferocious brute whose portrait appears on the cover. He was born on the H B C fur farm. The hands are those of the manager of the farm, W. O. Douglas, who collected the costume in the next picture when he was a sergeant with the R.N.W.M.P. in charge of Baker Lake detachment. R. Harrington.

The "British Ambassadors of Fashion"—English models who toured Canada and the United States this winter, and gave exhibitions in some of the Company stores—admire a bit of Eskimo haute couture from the Baker Lake country, in the H B C museum. Left to right: Misses Morna Howard, Georgie Clifford, Margaret Allworthy, Valerie Cox, Margaret Mullins. The native costume consists of a caribou skin artiggi with leggings, worn with the hair inside and decorated with beads and caribou teeth. The headband is of brass. R. Harrington.

Here and There

Northern transportation, new and old. Right: 7,500 pounds of cargo for Yellowknife, much of it for the H B C post there, being loaded aboard the British "Bristol Freighter" at Edmonton. The whale-like mouth greatly facilitates loading and unloading. Lower right: Eskimos at Pangnirtung post loading up their komatik for a trip to Frobisher Bay.
Editorial Associates and N. Ross.

Below: Cutting ice from Attawapiskat Lake at Lansdowne House post. Note the cut blocks in the foreground, and the curious type of sled used in those parts. C. N. Stephen.

FASTEST on FOUR FEET

by Dan McCowan

The Pronghorn Antelope of the western plains is now thought to be the world's fastest sprinter. But as a hurdler he's hopeless.

ONE of the most extraordinary animals on this globe lives on the plains of western Canada. It might well be considered a composite creature, because it has the coat of a deer, the feet of a giraffe, the glands and perfume of a goat, and the eyes of a gazelle. Moreover, it carries headgear which in form resembles the antlers of the deer tribe, but which in substance is no whit different from the horn of a buffalo.

In an athletic meet of the mammals of North America this prairie dweller would easily win all foot races under one mile, and in a running long leap contest would have few equals. Yet it is but an indifferent hurdler, which is not at all surprising when one considers that its immediate ancestors would baulk at an obstacle little more than knee high. The name of this animal is Pronghorn Antelope and, having no relative in Canada or elsewhere, it has of necessity been placed in a zoological class all by itself.

The Pronghorn Antelope, sometimes called Prongbuck, is a ruminant somewhat smaller but of more stocky build than the White-tailed Deer. An average sized adult of the species measures nearly five feet in length, stands almost three feet high at the shoulder and weighs about one hundred pounds. The predominant colour in the coat is tawny yellow, with pronounced markings of white on the neck and face. There is a prominent white rump patch. The ears, about five inches long and well haired both outside and in, are carried erect. The hoofs are small and black and it is notable that in marked distinction to other ruminants there are no accessory hoofs. The legs of a Pronghorn are as clean as those of a horse. Both males and females are horned but the horns on the does are very small. On the bucks any horn above twelve inches in length may be considered large. I believe the record is slightly over seventeen inches. The eyes are of great size, in fact almost as large as those of the elephant and larger than those of the horse or the ox.

Distributed over various parts of the body are no fewer than eleven glands. These secrete a waxy substance which has a somewhat rank odour. There are many theories regarding the use and purpose of these glands, although it seems most likely that they serve as a means of inter-communication. The antelope, like other wild animals, has a keen sense of smell, and in the nose carries a receiving set capable of picking up news concerning others of its kind in the neighbourhood. One eminent zoologist of a bygone generation thought that the pungent odour given off by the glands might possibly ward off mosquitoes and other insect pests. But, being familiar with the breed of mosquito common throughout the prairie provinces, the writer doubts very much if the scent produced by antelope glands would even discourage these winged bloodhounds, far less hold them at bay.

A fine head of a buck. Dan McCowan.

As mentioned above, the horns of this American antelope are unique in form. They are hollow like those of cattle yet are cast annually as are the antlers of deer, moose and elk. As a matter of fact the horn is but a shell, hollow for part of its length and covering a hard spongy core which is firmly and permanently attached to the skull. Mature animals shed their horns at the end of the breeding season, usually in November. During the two preceding months the bucks fight lusty battles for possession of small bands of does. These encounters, while furious, are seldom deadly, the curiously pronged horns being much less dangerous to combatants than are the antlers of the elk or the rapier horns of a Rocky Mountains Goat. The young

are born in late May or early June, the fawns or kids being commonly twins.

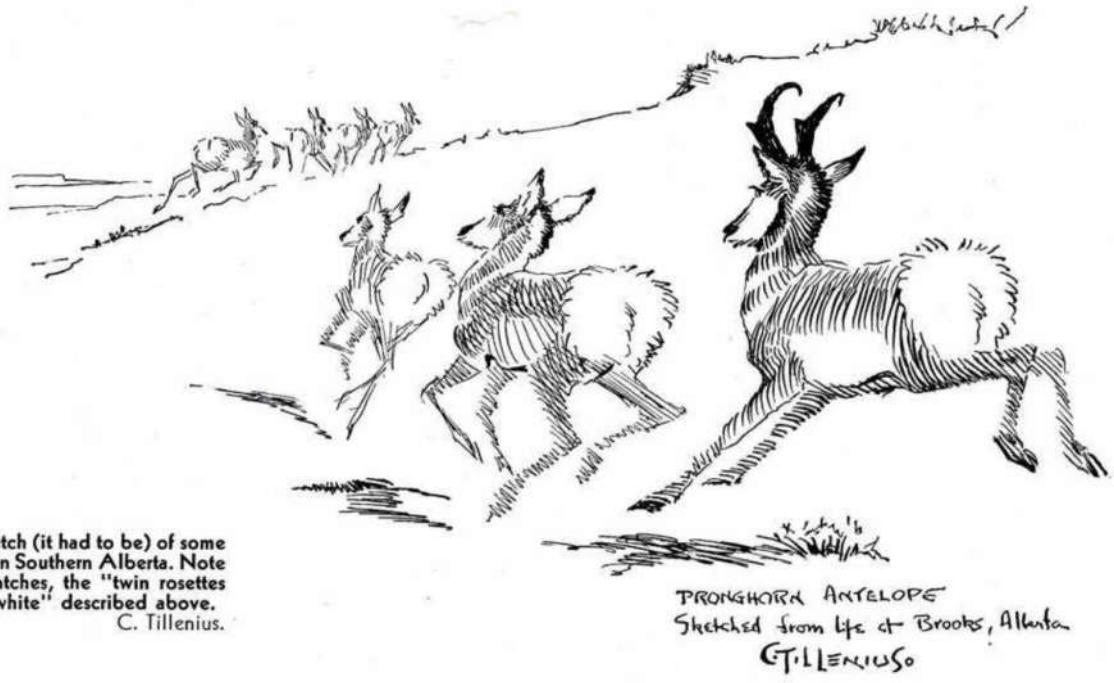
The voice of the Pronghorn is but seldom heard, indeed the vocal power is not even comparable with that of a gopher. Mothers call softly to the kids, and all adults snort loudly when alarmed or vexed, but otherwise the animals are notably silent. They depend more on the nose and eyes than on the ears in evading enemies. All members of the tribe, young and old alike, carry and make free use of individual heliographs, a means of rapid communication singularly adapted to the open spaces and far horizons of the prairies of western Canada. On each buttock there is a circular muscle which at will of the animal causes the hair on the hips to rise or fall, forming, when erect, twin rosettes of flashing white visible across miles of treeless grassland. Whether or not these fleet-footed telegraphers have established a regular code of signals, a dot and dash system, is not known to the writer. But as bats are equipped with radar, as sea fowl flying blind in dense fog have no trouble in navigating, and as certain lowly insects such as moths carry antennae and apparently receive "wireless" messages from others of their kind, it would not be at all surprising should the antelope flash latest news of interest, one to the other, across the open range in Alberta.

Principal food of the Pronghorn consists of grasses, sage and other plants found in semi-arid country. It is said that where water is scarce they eat freely of cactus plants, but one wonders how the animals avoid the sharp spines on such prickly vegetation. In recent years throughout irrigated areas in southern Alberta they have acquired a taste for beet-root tops, thereby incurring the wrath of sugar beet farmers. In some districts it has been found necessary to employ herders to prevent four-footed trespassers from spoiling the growing crop.

Little more than a century ago the Pronghorn herds occupied a large area between Red River and the Rockies. For the simple reasons that they were not fur bearers, that the pelts had but trifling value as leather, and that the flesh was inferior in food value to that of the buffalo, there is naturally but little mention of these animals in the early records of the trading companies. Yet at that period in the history of western Canada antelope were present in this region in numbers which exceeded those of the buffalo and almost equalled those of the passenger pigeon. Ernest Thompson Seton estimated that at the middle of last century the Pronghorn population in North America stood at twenty millions. Today they have been reduced to a mere remnant of the former multitude. In Canada they have dwindled to a few scattered groups, most of which range in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. It seems almost incredible that in but a few decades the greatest herd of wild cattle, the largest flock of wild birds and the most numerous congregagation of antelope on this earth should, literally, have been wiped out. The passenger pigeon may now only be seen mounted in museums, the buffalo survivors in national parks and sanctuaries; and, for a time, it seemed as if the Pronghorn would be the first native Canadian animal to entirely disappear.

That they were already becoming scarce in some parts of the west less than a century ago is evident from the reports of the naturalists accompanying the railroad survey from the Mississippi to the Pacific, made in 1853-55. G. Gibbs, one of the naturalists, wrote:

"Lewis and Clark mention that the antelope exists on the great plains of the Columbia, though by no means as abundant as east of the Rocky mountains. I suspect that they are nearly if not quite extinct there, as I have never met them. Neither have I ever heard of them in Oregon *west* of the Cascades. I however, saw them in large droves in the Shasta valley, and suppose that they occur on the plains of California generally."



A quick sketch (it had to be) of some pronghorns in Southern Alberta. Note the rump patches, the "twin rosettes of flashing white" described above.
C. Tillenius.

Gibbs's colleague, Dr. G. Suckley, writes in the same report:

"The antelope is, without doubt, sparingly found in Oregon; but unless stragglers occur on the Spokane plains, it is doubtful whether it enters Washington Territory. Townsend corroborates Lewis and Clark's statement that they are found in Oregon, and I myself have been on expeditions in the vicinity of Snake river when some members of our party have seen them. They are said by the Indians to have been formerly quite plentiful at the Dalles of the Columbia, but they are now nearly exterminated in that locality. A few, however, are still found at the warm springs near the sources of John Dea's river, about 100 miles from Fort Dalles."

To Indian hunters afoot and armed with nothing but bows and arrows, the Pronghorn was no easy target. Amazingly fleet of foot and living in a land where there was little or no cover, the animals might then only be taken by strategy. They were all exceedingly curious and curiosity killed many an inquisitive individual. A bit of bunting fluttering on the end of an upright stick served well as a decoy and proved highly magnetic to unsuspecting victims. Again, the dusky archer, lying on his back on the prairie sod and kicking his heels in the air, lured over-curious spectators within easy bow shot. I gather from modern hunters that antelope of the present generation have become much more discreet and may no longer be hoodwinked by waving flags or by performing antics.

So far as my knowledge goes the Indian tribesmen of western Canada made no effort to impound antelope in enclosures as they did buffalo. That such practice was prevalent however amongst some of the native people of this continent is revealed in the record of Captain Bonneville, an early explorer who sojourned for a time amongst the Snake Indians in the western United States. He wrote:

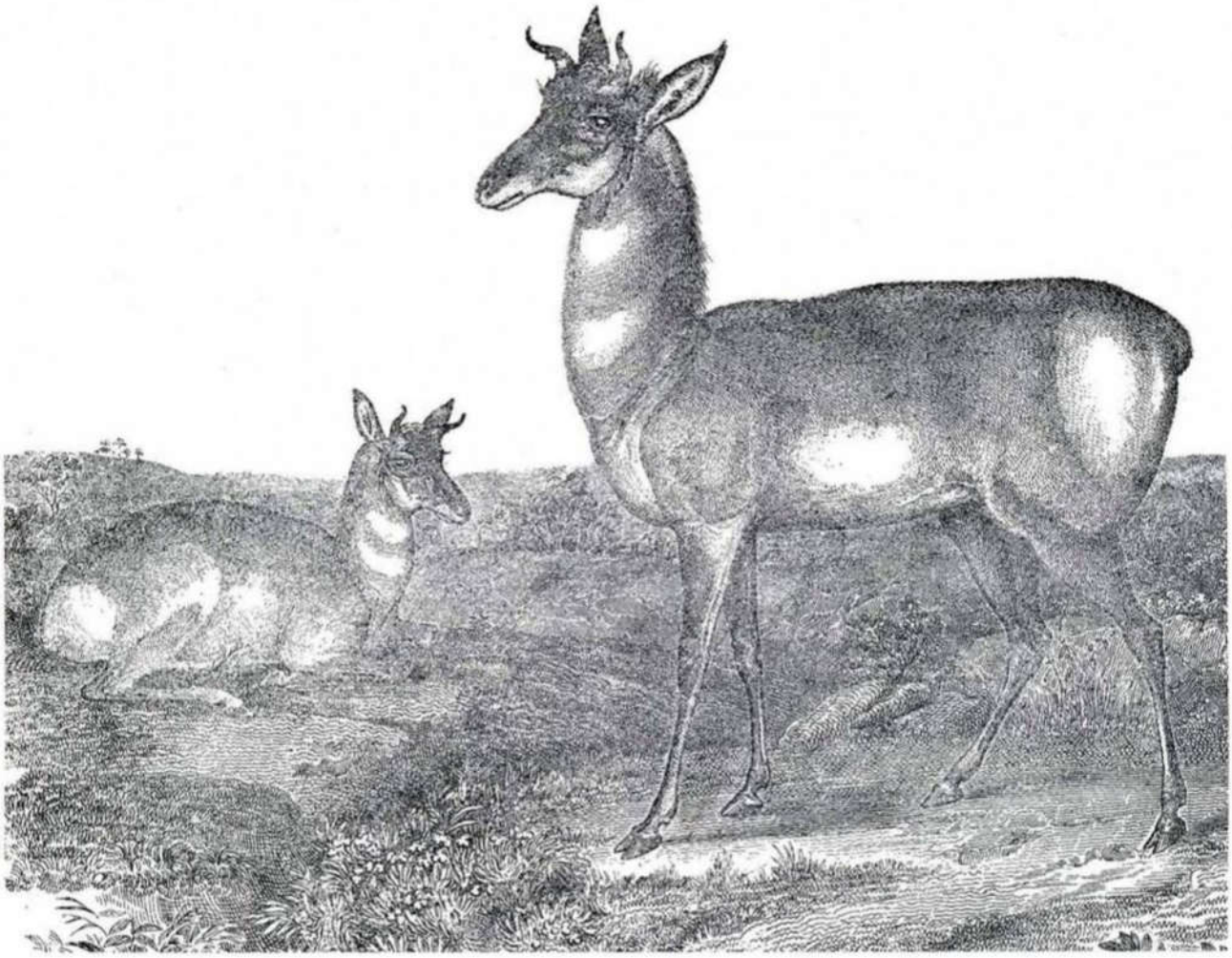
"When the snow has disappeared and the ground becomes soft, the women go into the thickest fields of wormwood and, pulling it up in great quantities, construct with it a hedge about three feet high, inclosing about a hundred acres. A single opening is left for the admission of the game. This done, the women conceal themselves behind the wormwood and wait patiently for the coming of the antelope, which sometimes enter this spacious trap in considerable numbers. As soon as they are in, the women give the signal, and the men hasten to play their part. But one of them enters the pen at a time and, after chasing the terrified animals round the enclosure, is relieved by one of his companions. In this way the hunters take their turns and, keeping up a continued pursuit by relays, soon wear down the poor antelopes, upon which the whole party of men enter and despatch them with clubs. The most curious circumstance in this chase is that an animal so fleet and agile as the antelope, and straining for its life, should range round and round this fated enclosure without attempting to overleap the low barrier which surrounds it."

Head of a female antelope. The horns on the does are very small.
Dan McCowan.

If this mild-eyed and gentle tribe of New World gazelles ever adopted a slogan, it must surely have been that of "Don't Fence Me In." It was wire fencing that first played havoc with the antelope of western Canada. When the first transcontinental railway was built, the necessary fences along the right-of-way prevented the animals from seasonal migrations. Later, when farms were established and enclosed, the creatures were further cribbed and, as a result, they dwindled rapidly in numbers. The coming of the automobile proved another blight. Driven into fence corners by callous gunners in motor cars they fell easy prey and soon were classed as rare animals. I felt sure then that the species was doomed. Heretofore, the animals had never been confronted by even insignificant barriers; they could leap far but not high, and the topping of a four-foot fence proved quite beyond their capabilities. When it seemed as if their days were numbered and they were likely to join the dinosaurs, the Dominion Government proclaimed a rigorous close season over a period of years, and thus the remnant of the antelope herds had a reprieve. Also about that time the survivors discovered that it was possible to crawl *under* the lower strand of a prairie farm fence and consequently the tribe had new freedom and a new lease on life.

Further, it would appear that in recent years the animals have taken to fence topping. In Idaho last January a small herd of antelope, rounded up by aeroplane and corralled, escaped overnight by leaping over the fence. A. Bill, editor of the *Calgary Herald* and a keen sportsman, told me that last summer, in the Brooks district of Alberta, four antelope ran swiftly along the fenced highway in front of the automobile in which he was a passenger. When pressed by the oncoming vehicle, two of the animals jumped the fence and two crawled under. Norman Luxton, of Banff, an outstanding authority on the game animals of Canada, states that in bygone winters on the prairie he saw hundreds of the luckless creatures, baffled by fences and frozen stiff alongside the barriers. Today, he says, the antelope are capable of hurdling a three-strand fence, but they much prefer to squirm under the wire. Thus, as the result of adapting themselves to changed conditions, they appear to be again fairly well re-established on part of their old range where formerly they grazed in legions. It took them half a century to solve a simple wire puzzle, but the effort was well worth while.

Their principal enemies to-day are gunners, coyotes and irresponsible drivers of motor cars. On a short stretch of unfenced highway in Wyoming in August 1946 no fewer than thirty-five of these attractive little

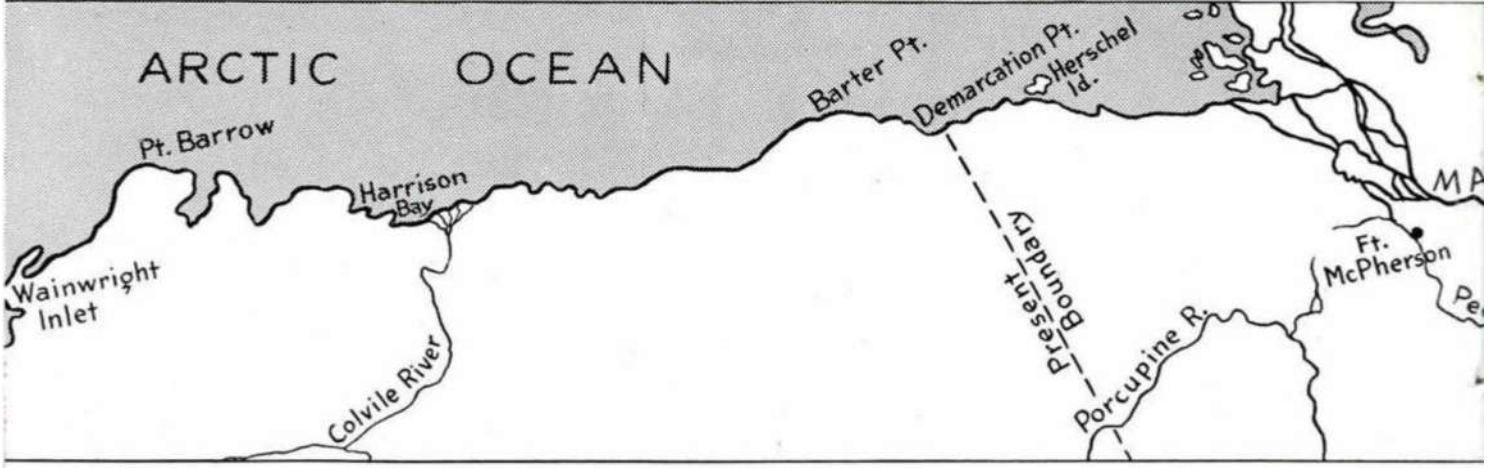


A steel engraving of the pronghorn antelope, or cabree, from the report of 1853-5 referred to on pages 37-38.

animals were deliberately run down and wantonly slaughtered by nit-wits behind the steering wheels of autos. Alberta provincial wardens have to be constantly on the alert against poachers who otherwise would soon cause the antelope to become extinct. Coyotes are not usually considered capable of coping with adult animals in their prime, but numbers of antelope kids must fall victims to the wild dogs of the West. Eagles have been known to carry off juvenile antelope but the toll so taken must be slight.

It is generally conceded that amongst Canadian mammals the Pronghorn antelope is the most speedy short distance runner. For some years after the first railroad spanned the wide prairie, it was common to see small bands of antelope racing alongside passenger trains in the area between Medicine Hat and Calgary. Acting under some obscure impulse, the speeding animals were strongly urged to cross the tracks ahead of the onrushing locomotive. Passengers watching and timing the runners as they sped alongside the cars concluded that their top speed was about thirty-five miles per hour. The building of prairie roads and the more accurate observation of antelope speed from motor cars has revealed that in short sprints the creatures, possibly with the wind in their favour, may move at the rate of one mile in one minute. Clarence Myers, of Vanguard, Saskatchewan, a war-time member of the R.C.A.F. and a keen naturalist, told me that in the Cypress Hills he had seen an antelope travelling parallel with and keeping abreast of an automobile whose speedometer was at the moment registering sixty miles an hour. W. Wood, of Boise, Idaho, claims that while flying a plane he saw antelope travelling at the rate of eighty-four miles an hour*. The cheetah, a leopard of India, and Thompson's gazelle, a native of Africa, have hitherto been regarded as the world's speediest animals. Their top speed of sixty miles an hour, when compared with the above amazing record of the American Antelope, puts these two quadrupeds in a class with the tortoise and the snail. The Pronghorns are somewhat short winded however, and in a sustained chase might well be overtaken by a hound or a horse. Nevertheless, the old saying, common amongst plainsmen in bygone years, that it takes a mighty good greyhound to capture even a mighty poor antelope still holds good.

*Sat. Eve. Post, Oct. 19, 1946.



PULLEN in search of FRANKLIN

by W. J. S. Pullen

EDITORIAL NOTE

Of all the expeditions sent out to search for Sir John Franklin and his men, few can have been wider of the mark than that conducted by Lieut. (later Vice-Admiral) W. J. S. Pullen, R.N., in 1849-50. His orders were to search the Arctic coast between Wainwright Inlet, Alaska, and the delta of the Mackenzie, for traces of the missing crews. But it seems that neither Pullen nor any of his men had been in that part of the Arctic, and had had no experience in Arctic travelling or living.

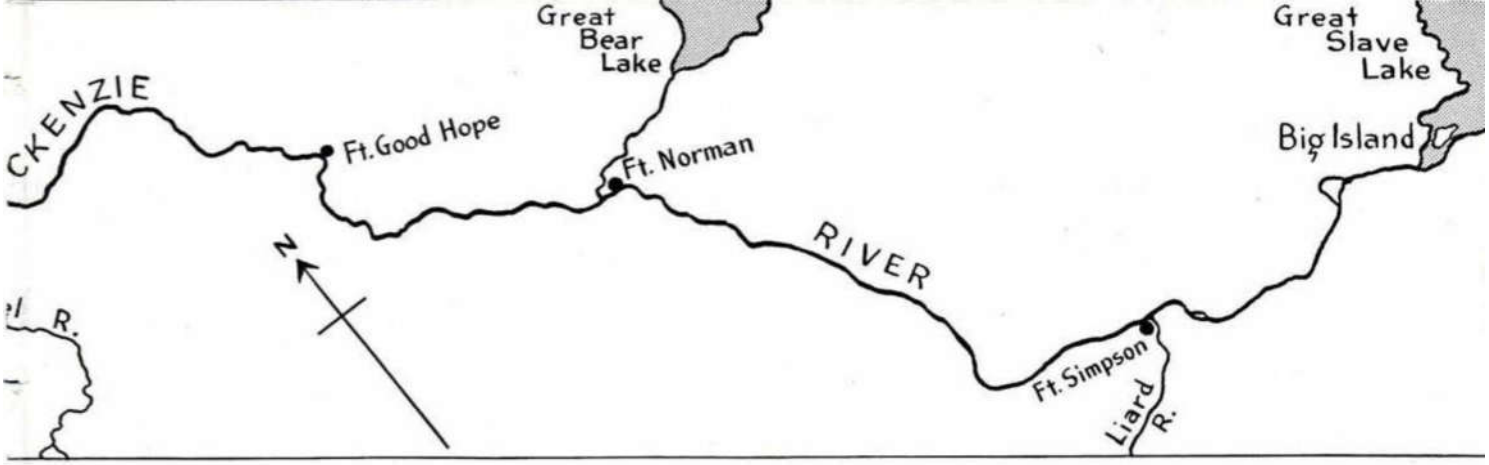
On the way along the coast, which had been explored by Dease and Simpson only twelve years before, they met numbers of Eskimos; but the natives' attitude was hostile, and no attempt was made, it would appear from this account, to obtain from them information on the missing expedition. Near Herschel Island, some people shouted and beckoned to the white men, "but all their shouting and signalling," writes Pullen, "could not make me land." By that time, it seems, he had written off the natives as a hindrance, rather than a help, and about the only useful thing he was able to do was to leave caches along the coast for Franklin's men in case they came that way. Whether the Eskimos respected these caches is another matter.

While Pullen was heading for the mouth of the Mackenzie, Dr. Richardson was heading eastwards from that point towards the mouth of the Coppermine, asking every tribe of Eskimos he met if they had seen any trace of Franklin's ships or men. When Pullen reached the delta, therefore, the whole Arctic coast of the mainland from Wainwright to the Coppermine had been covered.

Pullen returned to England, as will be seen from the second instalment of this article, in 1851. The next year he was back in the Arctic in command of the depot ship *North Star*, wintering at Beechey Island, where he left a large cache for Sir Edward Belcher's fleet.

The following account, written by the retired vice-admiral in 1882, was copied by Capt. H. F. Pullen, R.C.N., from a rare pamphlet and was sent to the *Beaver* by his father, Frank Pullen Esq., nephew of the explorer.

The oomiak was the Eskimo women's boat, used for transportation rather than hunting. Dom. Govt.



WE got sight of the *Plover* on July 15th. 1849 in Kotzebue Sound. I joined her at last and at midnight of the 25th. off Wainwright Inlet left her with the boats to search the northern coast of America for Franklin.

My orders from Commander Moore were to proceed to the eastward to the mouth of the river Mackenzie, and if no hope of returning in time to reach the ships in Sept., I was to proceed up the river and winter at any of the Hudson Bay Establishments I might reach in the following year and go with the brigade of boats to York Factory, Hudson Bay, thence by their annual ship to England and report myself to the Admiralty.

A few suggestions from Captain Kellett thus; that on my arrival at Point Barrow, after consulting with the Esquimaux as to the state of the ice, I should decide whether I should go on from there with all my boats only half way, or all the way with a division of my small squadron, with the chance of not getting back to the ships. And that I must bear in mind that the Hudson Bay posts were often hard pressed to supply their own small numbers.

My force consisted of the *Herald's* barge, schooner rigged, the *Plover's* pinnace and two 27 ft. gig whale boats with 70 men, two officers besides myself and fully provisioned for that time, besides ten cases of pemmican each of 32 lbs. for depositing along the coast, besides arms, clothing and sundries.

Soon after I left the ships a dense fog came on but quite daylight and sun above the horizon, so I pushed on to the northward with sundry detentions from the ice which was very heavy. I reached Point Barrow on morning of 2nd. August, landed for getting positions and to have a talk with the Esquimaux. Their information respecting the state of the open sea along the coast was very discouraging, more especially as to getting the large boats along, but I resolved to judge for myself before I fully determined on the force I should take on.

So after finishing my observations viz. Lat. of the Point 71 deg. 23 min. 10 sec. North Lon. 156 deg. 20 min. 49.2 sec. West, erecting a mark and burying two cases of pemmican with a note of our visit, I proceeded to the eastward for about 40 miles, landing on a narrow beach of sand from the heavy and closely packed ice near the shore. I determined on going on with only my small boats and reach the Mackenzie if possible under any circumstances. Therefore loaded up two gigs and an omiak [Eskimo "Women's boat"] I had bought from the point Barrow tribes with 96 days' provisions for twelve men besides myself and an officer, 420 cases of pemmican for deposit, also arms, ammunition clothes etc., so our boats swam very deep.

Bidding good-bye to Mr. Martin and the remainder of the men I started from the ship with those that were to return with the large boats. . . . When crossing Harrison Bay we were really obliged for safety's sake to throw a great quantity of our bread away, and could not get on shore till we reached the eastern shore. And here we had our first trouble with the Esquimaux besides landing on the lee shore, who tried to detain us as we were shoving off and keep our shovel, so that after getting it out of the sand where they had buried it we got away peacably but evidently to their annoyance in not keeping the shovel. Thus proceeding eastward and passing Beachy Point we came upon the return reefs and finding the water quite smooth between them and the main, I decided on going on all night, more especially as we saw on the main, a large native camp. They soon got sight of us and began coming off in their kyaks but I would not allow them to get alongside of us which they were very anxious to do. So pulling steadily till about ten o'clock I landed on the reef to give the men a rest, when from one of the kyaks stepped a large and powerful man, evidently a chief with an English musket in his hand. He seemed very proud of it, showing us how to use it by firing it off with great preparation, a couple of charges and then earnestly soliciting more powder, which request I did not think it prudent to grant, he going off seemingly disappointed. However, seeing so huge a muster on the main I had the boats hauled up on the eastern end of the reef and with the quantity of drift wood about built a barricade and the men lay down to rest.

This I allowed till one o'clock the next morning when we launched our boats again and seeing that a part of the mainland was clear of natives I pushed on to it for the sake of getting some refreshment in the shape of some hot cocoa. Lit our fires and things seemed to be going well, although the Esquimaux were increasing in numbers and the chief with the musket was getting very troublesome and urgent for powder which I could not grant, when before we could get our breakfast cooked he walked off to a bank well in shore of us, where the greater number of natives were assembled, lay down his musket, picked up his bow and arrow. A number of others doing the same and closing in towards us which looked very suspicious, so I ordered the two boats to shove off and wait for my boat, who would by that time have the cocoa sufficiently cooked. When I ordered all to embark and as I was stepping aft to the stern sheets Mr. Hooper said,"Look out Sir." When turning round I saw a

native lying down with his bow at full stretch, directed at our boat, but when I raised my gun, double barrel, and pointed at him direct, which the fellow seeing and I expect not liking the sight of what he was likely to get, dropped his weapon and himself too and we got off with the loss of our boats anchor and our cocoa too. So we pulled out directly up to the main body of the ice, about six miles off where I certainly thought they would not follow us and where we at length got our breakfast in comparative comfort but oh so cold.

Proceeding thence eastward on our journey we came to the Lion Reef and seeing how bitterly cold all hands were landed on the eastern extreme to get something hot; that accomplished we commenced to embark again, when we saw two omiaks pulling towards us full of men who, on landing on the reef, stepped out of their boats with their bows ready for us; but fortunately before they got up to us we had shoved off and got under sail to avail of the light favourable breeze blowing just a hundred yards off. I waited to see what our friends intended, when they gave us a shower of arrows, dropping close about us which the men were most anxious to return, considering it the beginning of hostilities.

But I was desirous of getting out of the way for if blood were shed there was no knowing where it would end, and these people were a daring set as we had already found out. Besides these there was one other consideration that, should any other parties be coming this way for instance any of Franklin's people, they would not in a way be able to resist attacks from the Esquimaux, for I could not give up hope that some if not all would yet be found. So I gave our friends a parting salute by firing my gun over them and made all sail. Thence passing through Camden Bay I thought our further advance eastward was over for the ice was so heavy, not only before us but close down on the shore, that I began to think we must go back to our ships for it was impossible to land. Therefore we had to sleep in the boats but the next morning saw some hope, so we pushed on much to the damage of our boats and we eventually got clear of Camden Bay. Thence passing Barter Point, Demarcation Point and got sight of Herschel Island, and finding the ice clearly off the shores, we were able to keep close to it where we saw large numbers of Esquimaux, but all their shouting and signaling could not make me land after passing Herschel Island where I found the ice clear away to the northward as far as the eye could see and the water was fresh, therefore concluded we were not far off the mouth of the Mackenzie.

When on the morning of the 24th. August and seeing no natives I landed at Kays Point to get breakfast we were not long without visitors in the shape of an Esquimaux family, consisting of one man and two wives, and while my back was turned they seized hold of my pewter wash basin and hid it away in some of their gear. But as I did not like being so served, accused them of the theft and the man saying a few words to his women they walked a short distance off and directly returned with the missing articles. So I gave them a few nails and we took a quiet breakfast, giving them a share, after which we proceeded on our voyage and on the afternoon of the 3rd. September entered the Mackenzie and landed on the left bank. Here it was necessary to examine the state of the stores and I was sorry to see two of my men looking very shaky. We had still a long way to go before we could reach winter quarters and get perfect rest, but oh I was so thankful to a merciful God for having thus brought us this far on such a perilous voyage. For since leaving the ship we had traversed a distance in open boats in an ice encumbered sea 692 miles, occupying 34 days.

. . . On the morning of September 2nd. 1849 we began the ascent of the River Mackenzie, but it appeared to me that my course was much too far to the westward, but all were rejoiced in leaving such a dreary ice bound coast and looking fondly to that we should be on our way home. Even our sick man brightened up occasionally getting a gleam of sunshine which so brightened up the wintry scene, for all the upper parts of the country were covered with snow and we were often driven to the shore for a run to get circulation.

When on the afternoon of Sept. 3rd. we were fairly in the Peel River and on the morning of the 5th. saw on the right bank a large collection of huts which on a nearer approach proved to be Fort McPherson where we were heartily welcomed by the gentleman in charge, a Mr. [W.L.] Hardisty and a large number of Indians on Sept. 6th. 1849.

With hearts full of gratitude to the God of all mercies for his care and protection of us in our long and perilous voyage, and in particular I feel was our escape from any collision with the Esquimaux, although

Herschel Island Harbour and settlement in 1936. The Company's buildings are grouped on the left. R. N. Hourde

Fort McPherson on the Peel River, as it appeared about fifty years ago when it was the Company's most northerly post. Note the skin tent.
C. W. Mathers

twice very near to it, and I always felt that if blood was once shed there was no knowing where it would end and their arrows would carry quite as far as our muskets and inflict terrible wounds and we had no doctor to look to, hardly a bandage. And although I felt no anxiety if a collision had occurred, as to the result so far as getting away from them was concerned but I could not divest myself of the idea that possibly some of those we were in search of might fall among them and they might take indiscriminate revenge, especially as they would be terribly weak and might not have many arms. So I always considered it better to get out of their way, although they twice followed us up. But all our difficulties were not over, as I learnt from Mr. Hardisty that it was impossible for my whole party to winter here. He might manage for five or six but the others must go on to Fort Simpson, a distance of at least 800 miles where we were sure of accomodation. So after making the necessary arrangements I resolved on leaving here Mr. Hooper with five of the men who seemed the weakest. I would go on with the rest to the further station.

Therefore after getting a series of observations thus; Lat. North 67 deg. 26 min. 15 sec., Long. 134 deg. 40 min. 19 sec. West, and taking a pilot, I left on the morning of the 7th, and got into the broad bosom of the Mackenzie 6 or 7 miles northwest of Point Separation. Here I found en cache a note from Sir John Richardson to go on to Fort Simpson to winter. This note was dated July 1848. Hence I crossed to the right bank of the river and commenced tracking over a shingly beach, but how long would they be able to keep up the pace they were going now, so heavily clad with the great sea boots? When on the morning of the 11th. I decided on abandoning the omiak which greatly lightened the mens labours in tracking. On the 14th. we met the boat returning to Fort McPherson with their winters supplies and Mr. Piers [A. R. Peers] the officer in charge and chief on the Peel gave me no reason to think that Mr. Hooper and the men I left at the post would be too great a strain on their resources. On the 14th. we reached Fort Good Hope.

Here we were also heartily welcomed by Mr. McBeath the gentleman in charge, from whom I got one of the Company's boats in exchange for my shattered one quite unfit for river navigation.

So after getting my observations . . . I left on 17th. and on Sept. 22nd. passed Great Bear River, the connecting stream of it with the Mackenzie Lake next day, the Burning Banks, where we got a few of the wild fruits growing, a great treat to us. We also saw on those Burning Banks strata of wood coal in a state of combustion, besides the fruit consisting of raspberries and gooseberries, and all around was the thick snow.

Our stay was not a long one, much as we enjoyed the fruit in the pleasant heat. So proceeding, we reached Fort Norman on Sept. 23rd. 1849. Our stay was short but I managed to get observations, and a small supply of pemmican, 30 lbs. dried goats [probably moose] meat and a small supply of flour, the greatest treat of all. So proceeding, when on the afternoon of the 3rd. October reached Fort Simpson and were warmly welcomed by Sir [Dr] John Rae, the officer in charge, it being the chief station of the Mackenzie district, which I thought was the end of our journey, for this year at any rate.

But alas, no, Rae soon informed me that my party must again be divided and the greater portion of its size, now of nine must go on to Big Island, the fishing station on the Great Slave Lake, for the winter, as all could not be maintained here. Accordingly I decided that I myself with the two Marines should stop and the remaining seven should go on to the Big Island and starting with the Company's boat they reached the station on Oct. 10th. 1849, and on Oct. 29th. the navigation of the river was closed and the country round assumed its winter garments in heavy snow. Large fires had to be kept in the Fort and the winter bid fair to be a severe one.

In the second and final instalment, Vice-Admiral Pullen describes his winter at Fort Simpson and his attempt to find traces of Franklin east of the Mackenzie.

Minutes of the HBC, 1679-82

Edited by E. E. Rich. Introduction by G. N. Clark

A review of the eighth volume of the Hudson's Bay Record Society

by C. R. Fay

IN phase III of the World War, when India like Eire is scrupulously independent and the Bank of England has been evacuated to Ottawa, it will become clear that of the three great corporate institutions of Seventeenth Century England—the East India Company of 1600, the Hudson's Bay Company of 1670 and the Bank of England of 1694—the Hudson's Bay Company was the long-term reserve asset of the British Empire. This Company safeguarded over the centuries its resources of land and forest, the human and animal life within its limits and above all that spirit of enterprise and good order on which economic civilisation depends. Rightly do we call it a vast domain even though on Mercator's projection its vastness is exaggerated.

As Adam Smith observed, England was a nation of shopkeepers on an imperial scale, and London its capital was a great emporium for the despatch of goods outwards to the "Country" (a term applied both to the English provinces and to the Hudson Bay) and for the reception of goods inwards to be sold wholesale for consumption in the home or European market—in the case of furs and tea, at advertised auctions by the candle. To the student of origins these early minutes, Vol. V, 1671-4, so ably introduced by the late Sir John Clapham, and now Vol. VIII, 1679-82, introduced with equal ability by the Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, are of unusual interest, for they are the beginning of a financial chapter which ends with Lord Keynes and Bretton Woods.

Our paucity of official knowledge about the Hudson's Bay Company is an old story. The accounts in the *Wealth of Nations* and in W. R. Scott's *History of Joint Stock Companies* are the two weakest sections in those books; and those of us in England who have read our *Fur Trade* by H. A. Innis (incidentally the introducer of Vol. III), our *Honourable Company* by Douglas MacKay and Merk's *Fur Trade and Empire* find ourselves a tiny band by comparison with the hundreds who have devoured the publications of the Hakluyt Society. However, we are slowly catching up and, indirect though the approach may be, I know of none better than D. G. Creighton's *Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence* (1937). The publications of the Hudson's Bay Record Society will move to their appointed end over the course of many years, by which time we in England will know you in Montreal and the prairies as never before. All the documents are being revealed, and this in retrospect will more than justify the long silence imposed by the Company's former policy. Moreover, if the introductions to each volume are one day grouped into a single book, they will be a matchless compendium of informed scholarship, expecially if accompanied by a map of North America such as appears in the pocket of Vol. I.

The documents in Vol. VIII comprise (*a*) minutes and accounts of the Company and (*b*) in appendix A the report of 1682 by John Nixon published from the Boyle Papers by permission of the Royal Society. The latter will be of peculiar interest to Canadians since it is the effort of a man on the spot to put the home authorities wise to the facts in the Bay. As Professor Clark explains, Governor Nixon, when he arrived in 1679, found himself up against a handful of problems, with which he deals discursively in his 64-page report.

Small ships (says the report) are needed for the speedy handling of the trade. Lacking these the Governor was marooned on Charlton Island; "for one may as soon have intelligence from East-india to London, as from the maine to Charleton Island." Send me, he begs, a small sloop, so that we may get on with the job of supplying our posts and packing the beaver for despatch against "the 16 of August, which is the best and safest tyme of the yeare for her to goe home in." There is always a bottle-neck (as we of 1947 would call it). For "sometyms we have coalls, and no iron, sometyms iron, and steel, but no smith." And as to men "I pray yow to send me Some country lads, that are not acquainted, with stronge dink, that will woorke hard, and faire hard, and are not debauched with the voluptwousness of the city"—in other words, the boys of Orkney and Shetland. And send me tailors to repair the clothes of these poor Indians: else will they have just occasion to say we stole their beaver. And I must advise your honors that the way to advance trade is to invite the Indians down and treat them courteously. But those powder casks they are subject to shrink in the joints by reason of the frost, so pack them up in sheepskins (one thinks of anti-freeze). Send us molasses instead of weak malt; for this is a bad country to drink water in. Also more butter and cheese—which reminds me of that pestilential fellow Captain Walker. . . . (His arrogance and drunken pranks occupy the next twelve pages and conclude with begging leave to chastise him with corporal punishment as an example to the others, or else to send him home in irons to receive his punishment in England.)

Coming back to ships, Nixon dislikes ship hiring and says it is better to have them built for the trade, "which is the custom of all men except yourselves." But the crews and the men in your service out here must be decently paid. For it is not like the East Indian trade: here a man cannot raise his fortune "but by his sellery." (The Company throughout its history rigidly limited the private trade which came to dominate the East Indian scene.)

Follows a further diatribe on Captain Walker, from which he proceeds to his conclusion, which ends with due solemnity "Considdering oure state and strenth but no wayes lyke to goe foreward with such expedition as it should for want of men. not haveing more at presant to trouble yow withall, for want of better drinke than water to drinke your healths at presant,

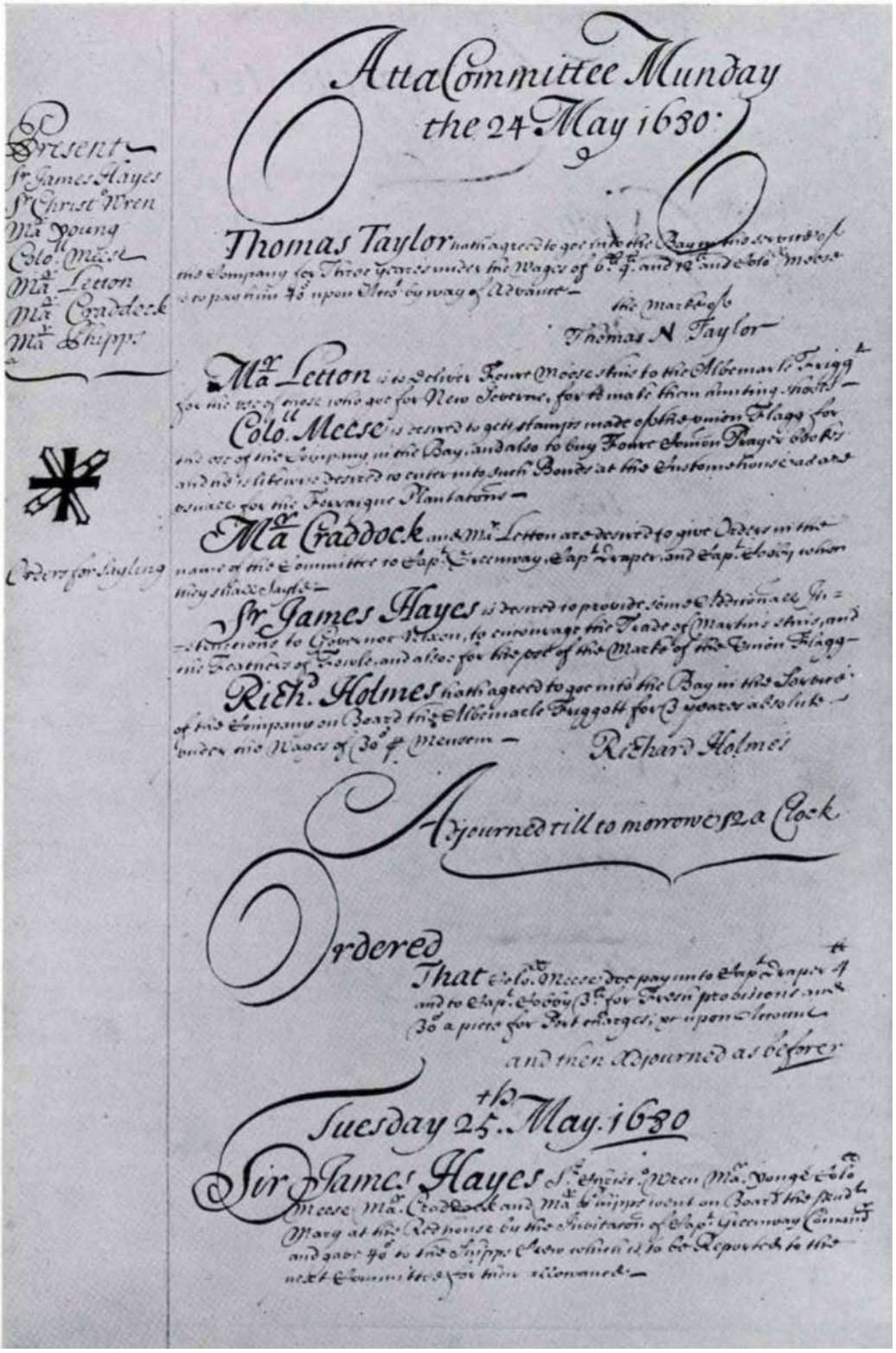
my humble prayers to God is to give yow knowledge in your effairs; and that he will give yow wisdom to decerne betwixt honnest men, and good counsell; and flattering knaves and bad counsell. and this shall serve for a health to the prosperity of the Northwest. From your humble servant John Nixon."

Postscript: "we have great need of a bricklayer. . . ."

Would that I were young enough to learn this report by heart!

The minutes are concerned with fur sales, provisionment for the Bay, the hiring, husbanding and insurance of ships, the payment of wages, salaries and gratuities, and with frequent borrowing by the Company from its own members in particular to put up the insurance money for ships and eargo, and, most human touch of all, an order for the payment for a dinner provided for the insurers after they had paid up. Among the most regular attendants at committees was Sir Christopher Wren, of whom in Appendix C there is a full biographical note.

I leave the volume with a final thought. If a team of statisticians got to work on the wage and price figures in the 30,000 documents of the Hudson's Bay Company, what a contribution they could make to price history. Professor Earl Hamilton and his Spanish team would have to look to their laurels!


At a Committee Munday the 24th May 1680.

Present—
Sr James Hayes
Sr Christr Wren
Mr Young
Colo. Meese
Mr Letton
Mr Craddock
Mr Shipps

Thomas Taylor hath agreed to goe into the Bay in the Service of the Company for Three Yeares under the Wages of 6li p. Ann. and the said Colo. Meese is to pay him 4li upon Deed by way of Advance—

the marke of
Thomas N Taylor

Mr Letton is to deliver Foure Meese Skins to the Albemarle Brigg for the use of those who goe for New Severne, for to make them Hunting Shirts—

Colo. Meese is desired to gett stamps made of the Union Flagg for the use of the Company in the Bay, and also to buy Foure Comon Prayer Bookes and he is likewise desired to enter into such Bonds at the Custome house as are usuall for the Forraigne Plantations—

Mr Craddock and Mr Letton are desired to give Orders in the name of the Committee to Capt Greenway, Capt Draper and Capt Stoby, when they shall be layd—

Orders for Sayling

Sr James Hayes is desired to provide some Additionall Instructions to Governor Nixon, to encourage the Trade of Martins Skins, and the Fortifying of Yorke, and also for the port of the Marke of the Union Flagg—

Richd Holmes hath agreed to goe into the Bay in the Service of the Company on Board the Albemarle Pruggott for 3 yeares absolute under the Wages of 30li p. Annum—

Richard Holmes

Adjourned till to morrow 9 a Clock

Ordered That Colo. Meese doe pay into Capt Draper 4li and to Capt Stoby 3li for Severn provisions and 30s a piece for Port charges, or upon Account—

and then Adjourned as before.

Tuesday 25th May 1680

Sir James Hayes Sr Christr Wren Mr Young Colo Meese Mr Craddock and Mr Shipps went on Board the Shipp Mary at the Red house by the Invitation of Capt Greenway Comand and gave 9li to the Shipps Crew which is to be Reported to the next Committee for their allowance—

A page from the Hudson's Bay Company Minutes of 1680, which will be found on pages 72-4 of the volume reviewed here. The design in the margin represents the "union Flagg" of England and Scotland, to be used as a stamp by the Company in the Bay.

DANGEROUS JOURNEY

By L. J. Kotowich

A true story of adventure in the North which has all the earmarks of a personal experience.

THE forenoon sun reeled over a haughty bank of clouds to spotlight two heavily loaded sleigh teams, picking their way in the maze of snow and water-markings across the expanded puzzle of a thawing lake. Two figures, nestled among the piled cases and bales, slowly sprouted arms and legs and climbed stiffly to stand on the highest perches.

Kenneth and Paul were volunteers. An outpost thirty-five miles distant was already low in supplies, and the first ravages of an early spring had taken a great stride towards break-up. Both adults and children depended on the freight to come through. To the men and women it meant essentials of life, to the children a wondrous avalanche of pretty things to see, and good things to eat. Kenneth remembered the list in his pocket with exaltation—five full pages of much needed supplies. Now, if the ice would only hold until they finished the trip——

Kenneth in the lead turned to look back just in time to see Paul's sled suddenly break through the snow on one side, and keel over like a clumsy ship. Paul, clinging desperately to the reins, was catapulted through the air to land just out of reach of a murderous waterfall of freight, spewing off the rack and plunging into the slush.

After an hour of sweating, floundering and heaving, the rack was replaced and reloaded. Paul moved his load but a yard—and spilled again. He jumped this time, and stood knee-deep in slush, muttering unprintable maledictions over the arrested cataract of the now too-familiar cases and bales.

Both men felt as if all their energies had drained from their tired bodies as they gazed on the scattered jumble. And then, as their mounting anger flared into action, they leapt to the task of reloading.

Hardly had Kenneth tied the last knot on the binding ropes, when Paul whipped his reins against the startled steeds. With a blur of legs, a bedlam of pounding scraping hooves, a spray of slush under their bodies, the plunging team wrenched the load out onto firm, level snow.

Camped that night in a cabin close by, Kenneth tossed with his anxieties. He awoke to the rattle of a tin stove that chattered at the draft lid as the fire hungrily gulped in the air. Outside were the first signs of the coming day.

As the sun rose higher, it forced them to abandon one sleigh and hitch both teams to the other. Thus, with two teams toiling at the one load, they pulled up to Max's shack, where they availed themselves of the ready fire to make dinner in the company of a trapper family.

The next two hours had minutes that made the two men seriously doubt their sanity. They risked and dared crossings that blighted their nerves. For long stretches one of them would walk ahead to test the ice with an ice-chisel or seek out the underlying slush, as the other guided the nervous teams with the care of a tight-rope walker to within mere inches of the picked lead.

They broke and trampled new ice formed over long stretches of snow water, too weak to hold the oncoming weight, then plunged the team and sled into half a fathom of water to ride on the main ice underneath, desperately hoping that it would hold.

And then finally, as they rounded a bend, the view of the outpost settlement, with its scatter of shacks along the length of a sparsely treed sand point, broke on them between the jaws of a deep channel. Their hearts leapt as the breeze blowing off the village brought the sounds of barking, tethered dogs and laughter of children at play.

From the point, tumbling and running furiously down the snowy banks, a group of squeaking children rushed toward them. The teams had been spotted and the whole village was aroused. Cabin doors snapped open like mouths in surprise and amazed occupants popped out. Faces peered out of windows that flung up their window-shades like eyelids to full wakefulness.

The following day the abandoned sleigh was brought in over the same route. Kenneth and Paul watched children devour their long awaited fruits and sweets, the women chatter like flocking sparrows over house and dress needs, and the men with the enthusiasm of boys gird themselves with supplies for the hunting trail. The excitable outpost clerk could not match his speed to the clamour of his customers.

The next morning the two teams, like two filmy silhouettes in the light of the moon, ghosted through the lane between litters of cabins and shacks snuggling into the ground in sleep, and out onto the river, to begin the return home.

Kenneth retreated happily from the cold air into the warmth of his clothes. The horses followed smartly now the well beaten trail, heads nodding recognition at each step they had covered four times in the last two days. Kenneth glanced at his wrist watch. At this rate they would be home early, he noted.

Abruptly Kenneth's team stopped, and refused to move. And then he noticed their stiff legs, as if slowly melting from the hoof, grow shorter and shorter as they sank into the slush. They were going through! Desperately Kenneth hauled on the reins to make them step back, but they only stood wooden and rigid. Before his unbelieving eyes water swirled about their knees over the pan of snow. The ice held another moment, and then, with the sound of a heavy cable snapping, it broke, and the team silently slid into the water.

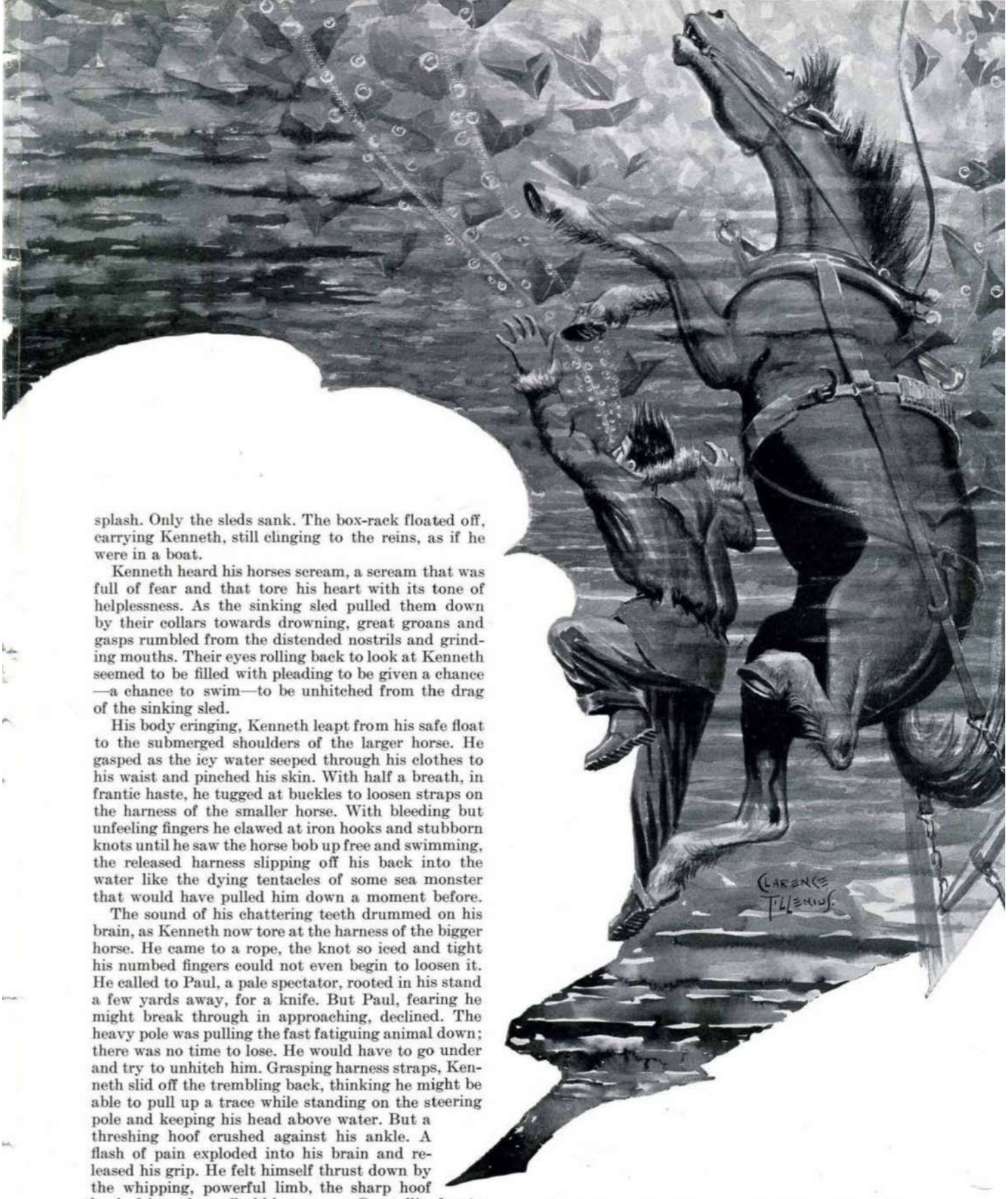
A powerful current swallowed the broken cakes and pulled the floundering team forward to ram their throats against the forward edge of the hole. Their knees pounded against the undersurface of the ice. The sleigh, following the submerging team, went in with a great

splash. Only the sleds sank. The box-rack floated off, carrying Kenneth, still clinging to the reins, as if he were in a boat.

Kenneth heard his horses scream, a scream that was full of fear and that tore his heart with its tone of helplessness. As the sinking sled pulled them down by their collars towards drowning, great groans and gasps rumbled from the distended nostrils and grinding mouths. Their eyes rolling back to look at Kenneth seemed to be filled with pleading to be given a chance —a chance to swim—to be unhitched from the drag of the sinking sled.

His body cringing, Kenneth leapt from his safe float to the submerged shoulders of the larger horse. He gasped as the icy water seeped through his clothes to his waist and pinched his skin. With half a breath, in frantic haste, he tugged at buckles to loosen straps on the harness of the smaller horse. With bleeding but unfeeling fingers he clawed at iron hooks and stubborn knots until he saw the horse bob up free and swimming, the released harness slipping off his back into the water like the dying tentacles of some sea monster that would have pulled him down a moment before.

The sound of his chattering teeth drummed on his brain, as Kenneth now tore at the harness of the bigger horse. He came to a rope, the knot so iced and tight his numbed fingers could not even begin to loosen it. He called to Paul, a pale spectator, rooted in his stand a few yards away, for a knife. But Paul, fearing he might break through in approaching, declined. The heavy pole was pulling the fast fatiguing animal down; there was no time to lose. He would have to go under and try to unhitch him. Grasping harness straps, Kenneth slid off the trembling back, thinking he might be able to pull up a trace while standing on the steering pole and keeping his head above water. But a threshing hoof crushed against his ankle. A flash of pain exploded into his brain and released his grip. He felt himself thrust down by the whipping, powerful limb, the sharp hoof hooked into the cuff of his trousers. Crystallized pain ripped at the last shreds of his senses, as the ice-flinted water enveloped him and rushed at his eyes, ears and nose with a thousand barbs of piercing cold.



"He felt himself thrust down by the whipping, powerful limb, the sharp hoof hooked into the cuff of his trousers."

Kenneth was not a swimmer. The shock struck him with searing force, and he found comfort in a swelling feeling of weakness, that counselled him to relax and surrender. The faces of his mother and a girl came as mental pictures, projected on the refracted light in the swirls of the rushing current.

Kenneth fought with airless lungs, that burned with bursting pain. He tugged and kicked feebly at the murderous leg pinning his cuff. He even bit and clawed. Suddenly the leg lifted. The current grabbed him hungrily even as he floated off, and pulled himself up. His reaching hand hooked wet fingers over the edge of the ice only to be ground and crushed by a heavy rump. He rolled clear of threshing legs and came up to draw in the cold air. As his brain cleared, anger swept over him. Despite the price paid, he had not yet unhooked the horse. But now he felt more accustomed to the water, and taking a deep breath, he deliberately dropped himself down.

His groping hands found the hooks and felt them go free. He reappeared again and hauled himself up with his clothes gushing water. He looked at his lacerated hands and swollen wrist. His wrist watch was not there. His ankle hurt with that kind of pain that made him sick in the stomach as he stood up.

Now that he was out in the cold air, Kenneth began to feel very strangely. The business of thinking came slow and fevered. The air was colder than the water. Spells of dizziness swept over him that brought on running shadows of darkness like grey clouds flitting past the sun, and his knees felt as if they could bend in any direction. Must be freezing to death, he thought, with a sluggish start of alarm. Heat, he must find heat before anything else. Max's shack, where the Indian family stayed, was the nearest place, though it was three miles away.

As Kenneth ran he felt his wet clothes freezing about him. His breath choked and gasped as he forced himself to a limping run, bend after bend, until his rejoicing eyes saw the familiar shack just ahead. As he came closer, tears sprang out to freeze on his lashes. There was no smoke. He stumbled up to the door and flung it open. It was deserted and the tiny stove was cold. No fire burned in its round tin belly. He searched his pockets. He found matches with wet soggy heads that rubbed off the sticks like cheese. None would light. Kenneth felt an overwhelming wave of defeat surge through him. What a fool he had been to have taken for granted that someone would be here!

He rushed out and shouted till he was hoarse, hoping someone trapping near would hear him. An alarm clamoured in his spinning brain—Kenneth, your feet —your feet—they are freezing! They are freezing because you cannot feel them anymore!

Sobbing with fear, he sat down on the threshold and strained at his boots to pull them off. He felt so terribly alone. The boots gripped the wet socks with such tenacity, that only after he wedged the heels between two logs was he able to pull out his numbing feet. He slapped them with his hands, sharp punishing blows till circulation came slowly back. He tweaked, kneaded and rubbed them until they glowed pink and burned with a throbbing fire.

His parka zipper was iced and would not work. He reached under it and literally tore his flannel shirt off his back. He wrung out the shreds and wrapped them about his feet. This seemed warmer than his wet and icy socks.

Kenneth now ran back to the scene of disaster. Paul had already pulled the team out. This time he not only took dry matches, but also the tea pail, tea and sugar. Thus equipped, and already feeling reinforced, he ran back again, the three long miles to the shack. His trembling hands lighted a fire in the cold stove, and his exalting eyes watched the growing glow of the fire. Kenneth stripped, hung his clothes from the rafters and roasted himself over the tiny stove. He drank searingly hot tea and felt new life infusing into his blood at each gulp. He knew then he had never before appreciated so deeply and gratefully the gift of living and the boon of tea.

Anxious to get back to Paul, he put on his still-damp clothes and started back. He found Paul fishing for the harness in the depths of the opening. The rescued team munched placidly at their feed of hay, their eyes calm and contented and without a trace of a memory of their experience. Paul had heaped on their backs all the horse-blankets, topping each with a bedroll. They were drying quickly with their own body heat.

Poles placed at an angle against the ice into the water provided a slide, over which the sleds and box-rack were pulled out. After repairing the torn harness with bits of string and rope borrowed from the halters, and even nails knocked out of the boards of the rack, the two teams were once more hitched and headed for home. Kenneth shivered violently as he hunched under the folds of the bedroll over his shoulders. The sun retreated. Night came, cold and dreary, but the two men still drove on, often rousing their teams to a racing trot. There was no moon or starlight to dispel the blank, cheerless darkness, murky with falling snow. At last they saw the home lights peering among the tall sheltering spruce.

Alighting from his sled, Kenneth heard a storm of questions from crowding people assail his ears. Strangely he felt there was so little to tell, that it was all so unnecessarily ridiculous. That they had gone through and lost time saving a team, seemed to his weary brain sufficient use of words.

Not until the next morning, when a friend noticed his watch was missing, could Kenneth be persuaded to relate the details of his unforgettable adventure.

Horse drawn sleighs on a northern lake.

Cover Picture

The picture of ferocity on the front cover was not made—as some might think—while the animal was in a trap. It was taken at the H B C fur farm near Winnipeg by an intrepid photographer named Richard Harrington, who made this shot—and several others—right inside the lynx's cage, within a few feet of her murderous claws. The drool of saliva hanging from the brute's jaw indicates the trend of her thoughts at that moment. We have nothing to record the thoughts of Mrs. Harrington, who was standing outside the cage, watching the proceedings. Fortunately, her husband survived to take some of the pictures on pages 30 and 35. He is now on an assignment in the North, the fruits of which will appear in the pages of this magazine.

Ghosts?

Weird things have been happening recently at a house in Victoria, B.C., built ninety-six years ago by Hon. John Tod, chief trader for the Hudson's Bay Company and member of the provisional council of Vancouver Island. The house, the first in what is now the municipality of Oak Bay, has been occupied by Colonel and Mrs. T. C. Evans for about three years; but it appears that strange goings-on have been noticed there by previous occupants as well as by the present owners. A rocking chair that suddenly starts moving with no one (visible) in it, a biscuit jar that starts swinging on its hook as if a ghostly hand were reaching for the biscuits, and Christmas decorations that slip their moorings in the night and are found piled in the middle of the floor in the morning, are only a few of these uncanny manifestations.

According to the Vancouver *News-Herald*, Tod "was known as a taciturn man despite having made seven ventures into matrimony." "Despite," we should say, is hardly the word to use. Anyway, the historian Bancroft, who knew him, considered Tod loquacious—as may be seen from his account in the *Beaver* of June 1941. The *News-Herald* goes on to say: "Persons who specialize in such things as haunted houses point out that someone in the far distant past, possibly one of Tod's wives, was not happy in that house and the spirit has returned to find some of the happiness it missed." Or some of the biscuits.

Back to the Land

When the Fur Trade Department of the Company opened a post at Lac la Biche, Alberta, recently, it was not so much a new departure as a return to the scene of former activities. For in 1798 Peter Fidler had opened a post on that lake called Greenwich House and trade was carried on there until at least 1885.

In the same way when, early this year, the Interior Stores Division took over the Abitibi Power and Paper Company's stores in the paper mill towns of Iroquois Falls and Smooth Rock Falls, Ontario, and Pine Falls, Manitoba, the men of the Honourable Company returned once more to trade on the banks of the Abitibi and Mattagami and Winnipeg Rivers.

As early as the eighteenth century the Company was established on all these rivers. In 1784 Philip Turnor had built a post for the Company on the Abitibi. In 1795 Edward Clouston had erected a post near the mouth of the Winnipeg River, not far from the present Pine Falls. And, some time before 1798, the Company had built Fort Kenogamissi near the source of the Mattagami. All these rivers were highways in the old days of the fur trade, and for many years they knew the cheerful sound of canoe and York boat brigades as they came and went with their cargoes of furs and trade goods.

Now, as so often in the past, where the Company's fur trade flourished and subsided, the retail trade comes to take its place.

The Ancient Game

From Roy Webster, golf historian of the Pacific Northwest, comes word of the first golf course in those regions—one that probably antedates any others on this continent. It was at Fort Nisqually in the 1840's, he says, that the Scots factor (evidently one Angus McDonald) laid out a three- or four-hole course near the south end of Steilacoom Lake. This, we imagine, was near the site of the first Fort Nisqually, the second site being occupied about 1845. According to Mr. Webster, the grounds where those bearded Scotsmen sclaffed around the links with their cleeks and baffies is now occupied by the State Insane Asylum.

Non-golfers will please refrain from comment. . . .

London Board

Last month H. A. Reincke, member of the London Board for ten years, resigned, and his place was taken by Joseph G. Links, O.B.E., of Calman, Links Limited, manufacturing furriers. Mr. Reincke has been for many years a leader in Britain's iron and steel industry, and has made several visits to Canada and the United States.

83° Below

Few newspaper readers or radio listeners can have been unaware last month that on February 3rd the thermometer at Snag Airport in the Yukon hit 83° below zero. This, it was pointed out at the time, is a new low for the North American continent, as far as recorded temperatures go. But it is quite possible that it has been even colder at Snag—if not at several unnamed places in northern Canada—when there were no accurate instruments to register it. (Actually the thermometer at Snag is graduated only to 80° below; the other three degrees had to be measured). Previous to January 30, the North American record had been 78.5° below, registered at Fort Good Hope on the Mackenzie, in 1910.

Yet in spite of all this, the climatologists still refer to the temperature belt which includes Snag, Good Hope, Dawson, Coppermine, and other frigid points north as the *Sub*-Arctic! The limits of this huge area, which covers the greater part of Canada and takes in the Gaspé Peninsula and part of Montana, are based, not on winter thermometer readings, but on summer temperatures. The Sub-Arctic, according to the climatologists, is that region where the average temperatures of the three summer months are above 50°; while the Arctic is defined as the regions where the average temperature of the warmest month is less than 50°.

This, as far as the layman is concerned, is most unsatisfactory. He holds that if the Arctic and Sub-Arctic are to be defined as areas governed by certain temperature ranges, they should be determined by winter readings, not summer. The summer is of such short duration up there that it hardly counts. It is the winter that really matters. A January temperature map can give us a much better picture of conditions in the north. It shows that the average January reading for Dawson and vicinity is 20° below, and for the district south of Dawson, where Snag is located, about 15° below. Furthermore, it shows that the most consistently cold weather is experienced by the dwellers in the Eastern Arctic, in an irregularly shaped area stretching from Pond's Inlet to Chesterfield Inlet and from King William Land to Southampton Island, where the average is -25°; yet the coldest temperature ever recorded in the Eastern Arctic was a mere 60° below at Pond's Inlet and Chesterfield.

All of which again brings up the old question, broached in these columns in the June 1944 issue: Where *is* the Arctic? Despite all the computations of the climatologists, we still believe that the best definition of the Arctic regions is that given by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—"the area north of the limit of tree growth." In other words, where the Eskimos live.

As for the Sub-Arctic—well, we think there surely should be some better definition than that for a country where the thermometer drops to 83° below.

Pass, Friend

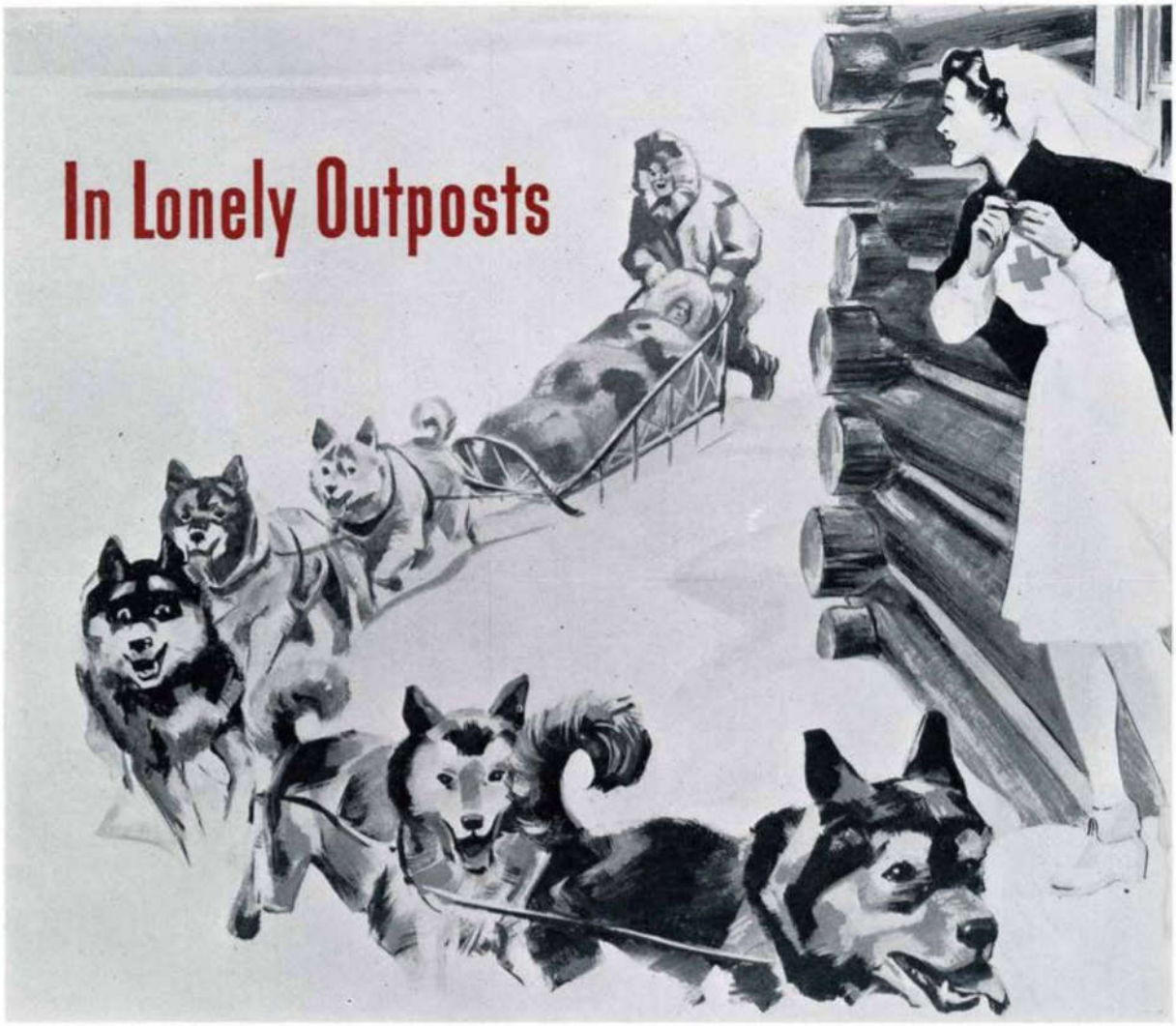
From New Zealand comes an amusing story from one of our former contributors, telling us how copies of this magazine proved a very present help in time of trouble. E. B. Maurice, formerly with the fur trade in the Eastern Arctic, and more recently with the Royal New Zealand Navy, writes:

"Once during the chaotic days following immediately upon the entry of Japan into the war, I was summarily held on a charge of being a member of Hitler's entourage. It seems that there was one named Maurice in that gang, and a photo of him, appearing in N.Z. newspapers, bore an unfortunate resemblance to myself. A photograph in the *Beaver* and an article on polar bears also in the *Beaver* helped considerably to establish the fact that I had never been Hitler's private secretary."

The article in question, "Nanook the Hunter," appeared in the December 1940 *Beaver;* the photo in the September 1936 issue.

Contributors

GEORGE ANDERSON is manager of the post at Pangnirtung. A Scotsman, he has been with the Company for twenty years. Two other articles of his have been published in the *Beaver*—"Caribou" and "Pagan Eskimos." . . . ERNEST L. BROWN was a well known hunter, guide and taxidermist of Warren, Minnesota, who now lives in Wyoming. His diaries are now owned by the Minnesota Historical Society. . . . J. A. BURGESSE, formerly with the Company at various Quebec posts, has made a special study of certain tribes in that province. . . . EARL V. CHAPIN, recently editor and publisher of the *Warroad Pioneer*, is now preparing a book on the Northwest Angle under a grant from the University of Minnesota's Committee on Regional Writing. . . . TED CLYMER, of Hudson, Wisconsin, took the pictures we reproduce in this issue when he was visiting Churchill in 1945. . . . FRANK H. ELLIS is well known to our readers as a specialist on the early history of flying in Canada. . . . C. R. FAY is Reader (lecturer) in Economic History at the University of Cambridge . . . RICHARD G. GLOVER is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Manitoba. During the war he served with the Canadian Infantry and Intelligence. . . . JAMES A. GREEN, a Canadian by birth, is a prominent citizen of Cincinnati, Ohio, who has travelled a great deal in the eastern Canadian woodlands. For a time city editor of a leading daily, his prolific writings have included a biography of President Harrison. . . . RICHARD W. HARRINGTON is a Canadian free-lance photographer, specializing in outdoor subjects. (See the note on the cover picture.) . . . LEO J. KOTOWICH is acting post manager at Wrigley on the Mackenzie River. Since joining the Company in 1941 he has served at six other posts, including Cumberland House, the locale of part of his story. . . . DAN MCCOWAN, F.Z.S., naturalist of Banff, Alberta, is widely known as a writer and lecturer on western natural history . . . W. S. WALLACE, librarian of the University of Toronto, is also president of the Champlain Society. He obtained the letter we reprint here through Mrs. Margaret A. MacLeod, who is editing a volume of fur trade letters for the society.



In frontier districts of Canada the nearest hospital or doctor may be a hundred miles or more away. Over twenty years ago the Red Cross began establishing outpost hospitals and nursing stations in these remote regions. Today a whole chain of Outpost Hospitals can be found in the frontier districts of the Dominion. They bring medical science within reach of these isolated communities.

Hundreds of thousands of patients have been treated in these tiny hospitals, including thousands of confinement cases. These hospitals also serve as health centres for their communities, carrying on medical inspection in the schools and organizing clinics for the children. Your help is needed to maintain and expand this vital work. Stand behind the Red Cross. The work of mercy never ends.

GIVE NOW . . . GIVE GENEROUSLY

HELP YOUR RED CROSS

Nicholas Morant

Under all lies the land. Its wise use establishes the well-being of the people.